

ELEMENTARY ENGLISH

JOHN J. DEBOER, Editor



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P.R.E.

By Way of Introduction . . .

MAY HILL ARBUTHNOT reviews at length in this issue (p. 58) the book from which our cover picture is taken. *Brightly of the Grand Canyon* has won enthusiastic approval from our able children's book editor. See the review for publication facts.

The guest editorial by MURIEL CROSBY, a member of the Council's Elementary Section Committee, is optimistic about the effects of the mass media on children's book reading. She makes a strong case for the enduring values of reading in competition with television, movies, and the rest.

When PROFESSOR RICE introduced Doris Gates, principal speaker, and all the other authors at the children's book luncheon at the Council meeting in Los Angeles, she demonstrated not only her knowledge of this branch of literature, but also her warm appreciation of it. Her article on Elizabeth Coatsworth reflects the same understanding (in the broad sense) of children and books.

CHARLOTTE'S WEB has probably been read by as many adults as children. LUCY NULTON in her delightful article describing her classroom experiences with E. B. White's modern classic, brings out important facts concerning children's responses to reading and to life. How do we answer children's questions about death? E. B. White has a suggestion, and Miss Nulton has made effective use of it.

The article on indifference or hostility to poetry, abridged from a speech made at a meeting of Pennsylvania teachers, is by DAVID WAGONER, author at age 27 of a book of poems, *Dry Sun, Dry Wind* (Indiana University Press). His new novel, *Carry Me*, will be published in August by Harcourt, Brace and Co.

RUBIE E. SMITH sees clearly the relation between creative writing and child development in general. Her article, "Thoughts Have Wings," reflect her keen interest in the developmental needs of children. She is active in many professional organizations, and is former president of the Kentucky Association for Childhood Education.

Successful supervision of creative writing calls for an understanding of life, and is immensely aided by wide and diversified experience. ROBERT R. HALL has had such experience.

After taking his master's degree at Teachers College, Columbia University, he served three years in the army, half of the time in Europe, and has since visited many European countries while an employee of the War Department. He has published both poetry and educational articles, and is interested in amateur dramatics.

Interest in reading must be developed early. DAN CAPPA provides valuable aid in suggesting titles of books which children in kindergarten like to hear read to them.

One of our most thoughtful and prolific writers of professional literature is RUTH STRANG. She is apologetic about including so many quotations from gifted children in her current article, but adds that she found them so interesting that she decided to retain them all. Readers will be glad she did.

GERTRUDE HILDRETH begins in this issue our annual series of research summaries, sponsored by The National Conference on Research in English. Succeeding articles will deal with the interrelationships of speaking, reading, and listening, respectively, with the other language arts. Dr. Hildreth's latest book is *Educating Gifted Children* (Harper, 1952). She is coordinator of new courses in the preparation of elementary teachers at Brooklyn College. Professor A. Sterl Artley is general editor of the series. It will be published in pamphlet form for the Conference by the National Council of Teachers of English.

In this issue's instalment of "Current English Forum," DR. ANDERSON offers an explanation for the way in which informed usage often becomes accepted as a part of standard English. His reference to "linguistic schizopbreuia" applies with special force to teachers of English.

"The Educational Scene" this month is especially strong in the area of audio-visual aids. This department will undertake to provide the services formerly offered by "Look and Listen." Our thanks to MR. JENKINS.

"Books for Children" keeps getting longer and longer. The growth of this department testifies not only to Mrs. Arbuthnot's seemingly inexhaustible energies, but to the great riches of books available. The titles included represent, of course, only a fraction of the current output.

GUEST EDITORIAL

Books Are Here to Stay!

During the last fifteen years there has emerged a picture of extraordinary cultural change whose full impact has been felt not only in our own country but among all peoples. In the United States, the effects of this change have been evidenced in the most minute and simple experiences in daily living. Our children reflect this change in their play. Three nine-year-olds, one boy a rocket ship puffing, "I can't make it," the others "in there for the honor of dear old gravity," pulling him down, are truly children of the mid-twentieth century.

What is the evidence that this emerging cultural change is having impact upon the customs of our times? It has been said that Americans are too busy to read, yet the sale of Bibles in the last ten-year period has been greater than in the preceding forty years. And the sale of books in the same ten-year period increased ninety-six per cent while that of automobiles increased only ten per cent. We are spending more money for concerts than for baseball games and our expenditures for travel both at home and abroad have reached astronomical sums.

The advent of television, as with radio, some twenty years earlier, has brought about a fear among adults that children will lose their interest in reading. Witty's early studies of the effect of television upon reading habits partially justified this fear, yet the same studies revealed that television had no adverse effect upon the read-

ing of comics. Certainly the earlier fear of radio as a deterrent to reading has not been justified, for studies of the problem revealed that a radio dramatization of a good child's story customarily brought about excessive demands upon local libraries for the book.

Rapid cultural change usually is accompanied by instability, a questioning of values, a searching for reality which Walt Whitman expressed in other times of change as, "The curious whether and how, whether that which appears so is so, or is it all flashes and specks?" Our children are peculiarly susceptible to these by-products of rapid cultural change. They, too, are seeking those moral and spiritual values by which men live. They, too, are seeking the understanding and the know-how which will help them live with satisfaction in their world. Of all of the riches of the language arts curriculum, good literature seems to offer the greatest support to parent, teacher, and child in helping the child find a place for himself.

A good book may help the child develop self-insight. A child who identifies with an admired literary character is helped in his feeling of belonging. Some children are helped through reading to develop values in living. The Schneiders' very lovely story of the solar system, *You among the Stars*,¹ gives the child a feeling of the order and harmony in the universe and helps him see himself in relationship

¹William Scott Company, Publisher.

(Continued on Page 63)

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No. 1

The Poetic Prose of Elizabeth Coatsworth

MABEL F. RICE¹

When Elizabeth Coatsworth's *Silky: An Incredible Tale* was published in the spring of 1953, reviewers proclaimed it a poet's book. They were lavish with poetic words and phrases that might even faintly describe the new prose publication. Mystic, delicate, marble-classic, crowned with roses from an old late-summer bush, the perfume of burning cornstalks were among the words and phrases garnered to give readers some slight conception of the quality of this newest incredible tale by an established writer.

Silky is by no means the first nor even the high point of the poetic prose of Elizabeth Coatsworth.

At the time of publication, it was merely her latest contribution to literature. Even now there are other titles on her publisher's advance list.

Readers of books for children and young people as well as those in the adult

field have long been familiar with the work of Elizabeth Coatsworth. While she was in her twenties, Miss Coatsworth attracted literary attention as an authority on the Orient. Following the completion of her work for her Master's degree at Co-

lumbia University in 1916, Miss Coatsworth spent a year in the Far East with her mother and sister. They traveled in leisurely fashion from the land of the head-hunters in the Philippines, through palace gardens in Java, to the Buddhist temples of China and Japan, into the Diamond Mountains of Korea, to regions where no white women had ever been seen before. The



Elizabeth Coatsworth

young poet was deeply moved by the experience, but for a number of years the only reactions of a literary nature to that memorable year were recorded in travel articles in *Asia* and other leading maga-

¹Whittier College, Whittier, California.

zines and in an ever-lengthening list of poems. Although she had been writing verse all her life, Miss Coatsworth's first published poems now appeared in *Harper's Magazine*, *Century*, *The Dial*, *Poetry*, and *Asia*. Her first two books were verse, *Fox Prints* (1923) dedicated to her mother and sister in memory of their year in Asia, and *Atlas and Beyond* which Henry Cimino decorated with woodcuts (1924).

In 1927, Miss Coatsworth published her first juvenile book and entered upon a third phase, and, many would agree, the most important phase of her literary production. *The Cat and the Captain*, illustrated by Gertrude Kaye for Macmillan's *Little Library*, is a vigorous little story, popular with children. It has a quality of writing and plot that holds the interest of the adult, a characteristic of almost all of Miss Coatsworth's juveniles. Everyone loved the Captain. The Cat loved him, too, but he took a naughty pride in not showing it. One dark night the Cat saw a face at the window! Now Miss Coatsworth has the reader in the palm of her hand and the story lives up to its promise. Thus the cat makes its initial appearance in the first Coatsworth juvenile. Rare indeed is the Coatsworth book in which no cat casts its mystic shadow across the pages and the lives of the characters.

In 1929 there came another book of verse, and Miss Coatsworth's second and third juveniles, *Touton in Bondage* and *The Sun's Diary* appeared. In 1930 there were two more juveniles, *The Boy with the Parrot* and the never-to-be forgotten *The Cat Who Went to Heaven*. It is in *The Cat Who Went to Heaven* that the

poetic quality of Elizabeth Coatsworth's prose is revealed beyond question.

Three elements were blended, Miss Coatsworth says, in her creation of *The Cat Who Went to Heaven*. The first was her lifelong interest in the myths and legends of the Orient. The second factor was her delight in the way of cats. From Maine, Miss Coatsworth's sister had brought a family of kittens to join the family in Hingham, Massachusetts, kittens that lived to become the ancestors of a numerous progeny. Some of them achieved immortality in books for young people, among them the Captain's Cat and little Good Fortune, the cat who went to heaven.

Finally, the third and all-important element was made up of the memories of that year in the Orient when the author had dreamed on the steps of Buddhist temples without number, looking at endless pictures and friezes that told of the lives of the Buddha in his many reincarnations as a lion, as a whale, as a tiger, as a king, or as a beggar. Many were the pictures of the legendary death of the Buddha, scenes in which the animals came to bid good-bye to the Holy One. Once and once only the alert eye of the young poet caught the presence of an animal in that farewell procession of the beasts which she had never seen in it before. "Last of all the animals" . . . there came a cat! The cat had rebelled against the Lord Buddha and did not receive his blessing. How did a cat find its way into this one of all the pictures? On that slender memory, lying dormant for a dozen years, hinges the plot of *The Cat Who Went to Heaven*.

During the winter of 1929, Miss Coatsworth and her mother were spending a few weeks in a house among the California hills above Laguna Beach. Elizabeth was to be married in June and these were weeks of rest and comparative leisure within sound of the Pacific, every wind laden with the fragrance of sagebrush. Sometime during this period of beauty and romance, the idea for *The Cat Who Went to Heaven* was born. Working breathlessly, in a mood of pure joy, Miss Coatsworth wrote the story in a week. The book was published in 1930 and in 1931, as Mrs. Henry Beston, the author received the Newbery Medal for the most distinguished contribution to children's literature for the year just closed.

The Cat Who Went to Heaven affords a rich experience for young people, though often they must be guided to it and through it with the aid of a skillful teacher. The sketches of the three episodes in the life of Prince Siddartha, who lived to become the founder of Buddhism, are of thumbnail proportion. Yet so smoothly and compactly is the biographical information blended with the story of the young artist who has been commissioned to paint the death of the Buddha, that one feels that he has seen the pageant of a whole wonderful life.

In the light of standards usually set down for story construction, *The Cat Who Went to Heaven* presents an excellent model for analysis:

Two of the three major characters, the artist and his old housekeeper, are introduced on page 1, paragraph 1, the cat on page 2.

The story problem is specific and im-

mediate. No one is buying the artist's pictures and he is hungry.

The conversation fulfills all the requirements set forth in books for writers. It builds the story, it shows the emotional state of the speaker, it individualizes the characters better than description can do, and above all else it is crisp, sparkling, interesting in itself.



From *The Littlest House*

The transitions in time are models of brevity and artistry. The mere skip of four lines and we have passed from one day of the artist's work to the next. By means of panoramic description, the reader is led swiftly through a month or more of time:

So the days went. Each morning the artist knelt on a mat and painted beautiful little pictures that no one bought; some of warriors with two swords; some of lovely ladies doing up their long curtains of hair; some of the demons of the wind blowing out their cheeks; and some little laughable ones of rabbits running in the moonlight, or fat badgers beating on their stomachs like drums. While he worked the old woman went to market with a few of their remaining pennies; she spent the rest of her time in cooking, washing, scrubbing, and darning to keep their threadbare house and their threadbare clothes together. Good Fortune, having found that she was unable to help either of them, sat quietly in the sun, ate as little as she could, and often spent long hours with lowered head before the image of the Buddha on its low shelf.

The master touch in transition is evident again as the artist, who must understand the Buddha before he can paint him, relives the life of the Buddha in his own mind. Although the reader may become intrigued with the story of Prince Siddhartha, never once in the adroit weaving of past and present, present and past, is he permitted to forget that after all this is the artist's story.

As the story progresses, there are increasing clues that Good Fortune is no ordinary cat. There is a definite "plant" in the second chapter. The hungry cat had caught a sparrow:

The artist would have clapped his hands and tried to scare her away, but before he had time to make the least move, he saw Good Fortune hesitate and then slowly, slowly, lift first one white paw and then another from the sparrow. Unhurt, in a loud whir of wings, the bird flew away.

"What mercy!" cried the artist, and the tears came into his eyes. Well he knew his cat must be hungry and well he knew what hunger felt like.

Since the quality of mercy pervades the Buddhist birth stories, one familiar with the Jataka Tales would detect the clue. What is this, he asks, another reincarnation of the Buddha? Or did the Buddha send the cat? But like most clues in a well-written story, it may pass unnoticed at the time.

The priest informs the artist that he has been chosen to make a painting of the death of the Lord Buddha to hang in the temple, to be seen perhaps by his children's children. Even as the reader rejoices with the artist, he is not permitted to overlook the presence of the cat who rubs encouragingly against the artist's ankles—a subtle "plant."

Elizabeth Coatsworth couches a delightfully practical touch in poetic language. The priest who calls upon the starving artist with the commission for the painting brings with him a purse heavy with gold, a first payment on the picture! . . . "so that you may relieve your mind of worry while at your work. Only a clear pool has beautiful reflections."

The eight songs of the housekeeper provide a unifying factor and reflect the changing moods of the story, but any page of *The Cat Who Went to Heaven* illustrates the poetic quality of Miss Coatsworth's prose. It has been observed in the quotations given. Children like the repeated refrain as the artist includes each animal in his painting. "He dipped a brush in spring water, touched it with ink, and drew a deer,"—or a monkey, or a snail, or an elephant. Equally poetic are the reactions of Good Fortune as she looks at each new creature on the canvas. "There is wind under those wings, sir," she seemed to say as she looked at the swan.

Many an artist teacher has used *The Cat Who Went to Heaven* as a springboard for an art experience, perhaps in finger-painting or in water color. More often pupil reaction to the story is spontaneous. Said one seventh grade boy when the teacher questioned him about the pan of water, bottle of ink, and brush on his desk, "I am dipping my brush in spring water, touching it with ink, and drawing a horse."

Never has the work of author and artist been more completely synchronized than in *The Cat Who Went to Heaven*. The beautifully simple illustrations of Lynd Ward are an inspiration to young people.

For storytelling purposes, *The Cat Who Went to Heaven* presents a hurdle. At the end of the last chapter but one, little Good Fortune sees herself at last in the painting—and drops dead, too happy to live another minute. Not so the wide-eyed listening children who stare at the narrator in shock and disbelief. The skilled storyteller devises a way to let the listener know that this is not the end, that there is something happier to come; for the final chapter is beautifully executed and completely satisfying.

To follow a book of the calibre of *The Cat Who Went to Heaven* would have given pause to many an author, but Elizabeth Coatsworth slipped gracefully and easily into her next juvenile, *Knock at the Door*. Marriage and motherhood came to her following the writing of her Newbery Medal winner. *Knock at the Door* was a fairy story with human overtones. Much against the wishes of their parents, a fairy maiden had married a mortal prince. Because of the interference of relatives who created mutual misunderstand-

ing between the young people, the marriage goes on the matrimonial rocks. The story opens with the Lady Drusilla beating her fists against the great stone gates of her native Fairyland, trying to remember the magic password. In the second chapter her new-born child causes much comment among the fairy nurses. He didn't look like other fairy babies, they said. He cried a great deal in a very earthly manner, slept a great deal, was a lot of trouble. To his fairy grandfather he seemed a very backward child.

Elizabeth Coatsworth looks at you with a twinkle in her eyes. "I was pregnant when I wrote *Knock at the Door*," she smiles. The book is dedicated to her older daughter, Margaret. *Knock at the Door* is out of print, but in the development of the Coatsworth style that has led to the adult novel, one feels that it filled a niche.

The current Macmillan catalog of books for boys and girls lists almost thirty Coatsworth titles, among them the five "Sally" books. The impetus for *Away Goes Sally* came when Miss Coatsworth and Mr. Beston found in the woods on their Maine farm a little house on runners with a stove in it. That became Sally's house, drawn by six yoke of oxen, the vehicle in which Sally and her aunts made the trip from Massachusetts to their new home near Happy Valley in Maine. In *Five Bushel Farm* we meet Andrew Patterson, a motherless boy who has been left with another family while his father is away at sea. Events lead Andrew to Happy Valley and he and Sally become fast friends. *The Fair American* is not only the name of the third "Sally" book, but it is the name of Captain Patterson's ship. Sally is invited on a summer



From *Twelve Months Make a Year*

cruise on *The Fair American* with Andrew and his father and has a brush with the French Revolution. In *The White Horse* Sally and Andrew, off on a Mediterranean cruise, are captured by pirates but, after exciting adventures, are permitted to return home. In *The Wonderful Day* Sally has grown into a young lady and to her own surprise she discovers that Andrew is almost a man, kind, and strong, and wise. A girl who has lived with Sally in all her books will thrill at the simple but effective romantic ending of *The Wonderful Day*.

Some of Miss Coatsworth's loveliest and most familiar poems stem from the Sally books, among them the haunting "Swift Things are Beautiful."

Hingham, Massachusetts, was long home to Miss Coatsworth, at least for some part of the year. Three of her juvenile books center about Janet, Lydia, and Mark who live in Hingham. *The Littlest House* which the three children have as their playhouse is a tiny cottage that served as the author's study for two years. *Twelve Months Make a Year* and *Plum Daffy Adventure* complete the group. Hingham is the background for one of Miss Coatsworth's non-fiction books for adults, *South Shore Town*. In one of the essays that make up the book, the author tells of her discovery of The Littlest House, of the days she spent in it, of giving it up.

It was I who loved it, and yet I gave it up. Not that I wearied of it—oh, never that. But a variety of reasons pointed the way. . . . The book which I had written about the house was finished. I could find no sufficient excuse to linger on.

But when I closed the green door of my retreat behind me for the last time and returned the beloved key, I shut away

out of my life more than a little house, and forever.

From "Green Street Court," *South Shore Town*

For a person who is interested in learning where a writer of books for girls and boys gets his ideas, there are other illuminating parallels between Miss Coatsworth's adult non-fiction and her juvenile books. In the following excerpts, observe the plain facts as they appear in *Maine Ways* (adult) and their adaptation for juvenile fiction in *Houseboat Summer*:

Maine Ways Page 11

"We'd better show them what we found," said Charles the son-in-law. And he led us to the edge of the big pines where two narrow slabs of slate were driven into the ground some four feet apart.

"Probably a child was buried here before they began the graveyard above your place. They always say this was the first cleared land on the Neck."

"Yes," said Mr. Hardy. "When you work in the woods around where the early houses stood, you find graves marked like this, often two or three of them together. Once in a while they've scratched initials or a date on the stone, but usually its plain like this one."

We looked down at the anonymous little grave. Is a boy or a girl buried there? We shall never know, but the oblong field in the heart of the pines has an added sentiment because of the child's bones lying in it, and it is curious that not far away grows a bed of the only white everlasting flowers I have seen in this part of the country.

Houseboat Summer Pages 47-48

It was Sandy who found the two stones, a big slab of slate from the edge of the pond and a small slab, stuck deeply into the earth three or four feet from each other.

"It's a grave," she said, sitting on her heels beside it, looking up at Bill with wide eyes.

"It wouldn't be so near the house," thought Bill. "I've seen lots of slabs thrown up like that by the roots."

"But they have initials cut in them," Sandy said. "Look, Bill."

"E. M. A." What instrument had so crudely and carefully chipped out those letters long ago? What unaccustomed hand had slanted the date "1782" across the uneven stone?

"It must have been a child," said Sandy very low. "They put the grave near the house, where it would be safe from wild animals."

Bill dropped down beside her and stared at the slab. These woods were empty now of any danger. But what had roamed them in 1782, what wolves, what bears, what catamounts? What isolation had surrounded this little house in the wilderness? But the grave was not all they discovered about the people who had lived above Deep Cove so long ago.

There are interesting cross-references between Miss Coatsworth's books and those of her naturalist husband, Henry Beston. Among Mr. Beston's numerous books are these titles: *Northern Farm*, *A Chronicle of Maine*, a commentary on farming methods, past and present; and *Herbs and the Earth*. Mr. Beston has his own herb garden.

Miss Coatsworth's novel, *Here I Stay*, is classified both as a novel for young adults and for adults. The heroine, Margaret Winslow, living in the early 1800's, struggles to make a success of the rugged Maine farm she has inherited from her father. Margaret, too, has an herb garden:

Here I Stay Page 65

There grew the sage and the green wormwood whose leaves the priestesses of Isis had worn; there were balm and thyme, dear to Virgil; hyssop, so good for colds; peppermint and striped applemint; yel-

low-flowered rue and lovage which her father had liked for its hardihood and the bold lift of its leaves to the mid-day sun. There grew wild ginger with its solitary flower; scull-cap with its gift of sleep; and the low bright leaves of gold-thread. Margaret loved best of all to work there in mid-morning when the gathering heat of the sun drew up the many strong fragrances of the leaves and the bees filled the air with their humming.

One is not surprised that *Here I Stay* is dedicated to Henry Beston, as is the juvenile book *Five Bushel Farm*, replete with early Maine farm lore. That there is much literary reciprocity between the Bestons is indicated by a remark of Mr. Beston as he discussed his latest book for children, *Henry Beston's Fairy Tales* (Aladdin Books, 1952). "When Betsy read the manuscript," he said with a sidelong glance at his wife, "she told me that my fairyland sounded suspiciously like Maine to her."

Coatsworth juveniles take the young reader to far parts of the world and to early days in his own country. A few titles suggest the scope in both areas: *Tonio and the Stranger. A Mexican Adventure*; *The Boy with the Parrott (Guatemala)*; *Cricket and the Emperor's Son*, (Japan); *The House of the Swan* (France); *Touton in Bondage* (Morocco), *Dollar for Luck*, the store boat along the coast in early Maine; *First Adventure*, (Plymouth Colony); *The Wishing Pear* (Dutch New York); *Boston Bells*, the boyhood of John Copley; and *The Golden Horseshoe* (Virginia), Miss Coatsworth's deep interest in the American Indian is obvious in all her books on early America, but particularly so in *The Golden Horseshoe*.

Elizabeth Coatsworth's appearance in



From *Wishing Pear*

school textbooks marks an important literary experience for children. The school reader, *Runaway Home* (Row, Peterson) is written entirely by Miss Coatsworth with Mabel O'Donnell as Educational Director. The book-length story centers about the circuitous trailer journey of the Harding family from their old home in Maine, through the deep South and Southwest to their new home in Tacoma, Washington. Miss Coatsworth's poetic prose brightens every page of the reader. She has written no more beautiful description anywhere than that of the early morning departure of the swallows from the Mission San Juan Capistrano, or that of San Francisco harbor where "The Golden Gate Bridge stretched like a supporting strand of a spider web from shore to shore."

In the early 1940's, Miss Coatsworth published two novels for adults, *A Toast to the King* and *The Trunk*. But with the appearance of her two Incredible Tales, *The Enchanted* (1951), and *Silky* (1953), this most versatile of authors has embarked upon still another phase of her amazing literary career—fantasy at the adult level. Friends say that after Miss Coatsworth returned from the trip on which she heard the legend of *The Enchanted*, she sat down and wrote the book in one sitting. In that tale, human and animal kind are linked. "If you know partridges," said Miss Coatsworth, "you would guess right at the beginning. The clues are all there." Some clues are more obvious in a second reading!

In *Silky* the unity is one of Time when the old graveyard gate swings outward to permit the Past to walk again and lend its strength and understanding to the Present. The first of the two fantasies is a Summer tale, the second Winter. The publisher, Pantheon Books, announces that the third book in the trilogy represents Spring and will appear early in 1955. It is based on an Indian legend. To try to guess at the nature of fantasy Miss Coatsworth may have in store for us in that book would be futile. One can only wait and wonder, What next!

Eight-Year-Olds Tangled in "Charlotte's Web"

LUCY NULTON¹

It all began when eight-year-old Kimsey sprang to his feet, waving both arms and rhythmically swinging his body, to exclaim exuberantly, "Let's write to that man! This is the best book we've ever read. Let's write and ask him to write another one!"

The eight-year-olds and their teacher were reading aloud daily, presumably a chapter a day though often enthusiasm prevailed and the wail, "We can't stop now!" led into another chapter. The book was E. B. White's *Charlotte's Web*. We were in the middle of chapter thirteen where Wilbur was doing acrobatics to show Charlotte that he was "radiant" when Kimsey's idea hit.

There was a stunned silence, partly at the interruption of such a good paragraph, partly at the enormity of the idea. The silence percolated. The teacher kept still, though undoubtedly her eyes must have been dancing.

Faith quietly penetrated the silence. "Mr. White might like to know how much we're enjoying his book."

"I like the way the geese talk. I'm going to tell him to put more talk like that in the next book!" Manuel chortled.

Here came the discussion.

"Could we write to him? I guess we could—just like we do to anybody else."

"What's his address?"

"Does the title page tell his address?"

"No, of course not. He might move. A title page doesn't tell that."

"It tells where the book was printed."

"Miss N., could you get his address?"

At this point the teacher explained that a letter to an author could be addressed in care of the company which published the book. The title page was consulted.

Discussion resumed, accepting fully the idea that we would write and further formulating things which they wished to say.

"I'm going to tell him I like the parts where he puts in the names of so many things."

"No pig should be made to live on a manure pile. It's not fair to Wilbur. I'm going to tell him that!" Bill rebelliously exploded.

"This is not real," said Luke in scorn. "Wilbur's not a real pig."

"Is he, Miss N.? Is Wilbur a real pig?" anxiously from Susan who likes to be accurate and whose imagination chooses statistics and facts rather than fairy make-believe.

"I'm not personally acquainted with either Wilbur or Mr. E. B. White," said their teacher, "but I do remember when

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Mr. White went up into New England and bought a farm. He wrote about it in a magazine for grown-ups and I was quite disappointed because I wanted him to do more writing instead of going off to a farm. So perhaps Wilbur is real."

"It sounds real."

"I think Lurvy's queer. I'm sure Fern's real."

"The best part of the whole book is where"

Now there are times when it is best to act in the enthusiasm of the moment with young children. (Even with adults writing may be like that.) There are other times in our progress toward maturity when we can learn to wait a little, withhold judgment, season our enjoyment with a mellow perspective of the whole. To all the factors of maturity and ability in such a situation the teacher must be sensitively attuned.

Had we better write now while this enthusiasm and discussion are running high or can we risk having enough maturity to be able to hold purpose, ideas, and enthusiasm until we have read the whole and can write with perspective?

Will it kill the enjoyment of the book—put a plodding, have-to-work hex upon it if we labor over writing letters now?

Have we the ability to sharpen our judgments and make deeper interpretations if we let this idea of writing letters simmer awhile? Can the simmering stimulate us to do that?

Do they all want keenly enough to do this that the idea will not pass with the enthusiastic moment and the letters level

off to an uninspired and unexpressive exercise?

These were the questions racing through the teacher's mind as she watched and listened to the group discussion. Now, with the comment, "The best part of the book is where—", decision must be swift. The teacher plunged. Maturity is worth taking risks.

"How do you know where the best part of the book is when we've only read about half of it?" she asked.

A surprised silence. Here we'd been so busy talking we'd forgotten there was more story! But not one child said, "Let's go on with the story." The letters were important.

After a moment Pat spoke. "We'd better wait. No telling how good it's going to be before the end."

"We could still say what we wanted to after we finish the book."

"I'll still like the way the geese talk."

"You might like some other things, too."

"Oh, yeah, like the way Fern hears all the animals are saying."

"That's not real. Animals don't talk," Susan persisted.

"You can't prove they don't!" triumphantly from James, suspended that line of discussion and caused Susan to retire into bemused silence.

"Let's keep reminding ourselves of the things we want to say, then write when we finish the whole book," came the constructive suggestion from June.

"Then we'd know what's the best part and we'd know what happened to Wilbur," added Lucia.

"We could take June's suggestion," the teacher reinforced the line of planning, "and try to remember the things we especially want to say. We might have other things we'd like to say after we've read the whole, then if we'd already written we'd be sorry we hadn't known about that part. Can you each remember for a few days the things you'd like to say to Mr. White? Shall we keep thinking of the things we'd like to say as we go on with the book?"

Thus it was decided.

Then came the day when in an interval between work period and finishing cleaning up, some child picked up the book and hastily read ahead. The others were finishing the last quiet putting away of materials when the child's voice was heard in an horrified exclamation from the library corner. "Something horrible is happening! Charlotte is going to die!—I'm not sure—but I think—Templeton's going to eat her."

"Oh, no!"

"Unhuh,—"

"She dies."

"She couldn't!"

"She could. Everything dies some time."

"We can't find out now. We've got to make plans for painting the see-saws tomorrow and check the lunch money," complained Moki. "She shouldn't have read ahead."

So we checked lunch money, made plans for several activities, had play time, and finally got back to Charlotte.

Emotion was powerful. Eyes were filled, though eight-year dignity held tears

within the lids. Teacher began to wonder if we had better stop reading.

"I'm going to tell Mr. White I'm sorry Charlotte died," Nita mumbled with a sniff.

"Maybe she won't after all," suggested the teacher.

"It will all turn out happily after all," spoke Sandra. "Don't you know how they always get married and live happily ever after?"

"No, it won't! That's just in movies. It's not like that in real life and in good books!" from Kit.

"Is a sense of literary values developing!" exclaimed the teacher to herself. "'Not like that in *good* books', that child can never be satisfied with trashy, un-genuine writing!"

There followed speculation as to how the book might turn out; what endings would make a good book out of it. Teacher took care there wasn't time to read further just then. Insights could ripen.

They did. As suspense mounted insights were heightened. Comments were continuous and penetrating, yet balanced by restraint and reserved waiting for conclusion of the whole. At times the teacher wondered, however, if so much had been said that at the end there would be no need to express in writing.

Not so. The book was finished in a satisfied silence which remained satisfactory for the long, breathless moment that follows all good reading aloud.

"There,—it has ended—just right," said Nita, groping in her mind to try to

find why it was just right although Charlotte had died after all.

"Yes! Now tomorrow we will write to Mr. White and tell him." Decisive James! So right that his decision was accepted and the children turned immediately to other activities.

"How did these children come by their maturity?" wondered the teacher. To have attempted writing the letters now would have been surfeit. The letters would have been empty. "How did they know?" Gratefully she watched their strenuous physical activity. "I shall wait," she concluded, "until they, themselves, bring up the matter of writing letters. Then we can discuss it and plan what we want to say—at least discuss and plan enough to stimulate them to carry through." How like a teacher! And how like children, when given a chance, that it didn't work out what way at all.

The next day at the hour usually reserved for children to choose worthwhile activities, first one child, then another, finally the whole group, got pencil and paper without comment. And lo! suddenly, we were all writing. No remarks had been made. No plans were needed. Each person knew what he wanted to say.

"How do you spell 'manure pile'?" from Bill, then a mutter, "It just isn't fair!"

"How do you spell 'goo-goo-goose'?" giggled Manuel. "I'm telling him I like the way he made the goo-goo-goose talk!" Manuel never realized he had transposed the technique.

The letters, although longer than usual and full of unaccustomed vocabulary, were quickly written. They were spontaneous and varied. In most cases the writer expressed one point which, apparently, he considered most important. The quick, spontaneous illustrations and marginal decorations were as expressive as the writing. Every letter had some decorations: webs, spiders, a pig, a mouse, running vines, or a cleverly drawn episode.

We did not actually dare let ourselves hope for a reply. Repeatedly we reminded ourselves, "He is a very busy person. He has many important things to do."

One month later came the reply from Mr. E. B. White.

"Dear Third Graders:

"I didn't mean to be so slow in answering your letters. It is almost a month since you wrote them. I loved getting them and I am very pleased to know that you liked *Charlotte's Web*, and I am glad that you told me your reasons.

"And now I will tell you about a trip I made to my barn a couple of weeks ago. I wanted to see my friends, the animals, so I drove all the way to Maine—five hundred miles. When the geese saw me they cheered. In the barn cellar I found two new lambs. The ground was covered with snow and the thermometer said 5 above zero. One night while I was there, one of my sheep had twin lambs—little black ones, with black faces and black legs. They love to jump and dance. Everywhere in the barn were clusters of spiders' eggs, and I am sure that when I go back in the spring I will find some of Charlotte's grandchildren.

"Thank you again for your wonderful letters and the drawings that you made for me.

Sincerely yours,
E. B. White"

"Oh—oooh!" the long release of suspended satisfaction.

"Read it again!"

The teacher did. Then a child read it aloud.

"It is just right," from Lucia. (In other words, "He didn't talk down to us or patronize us and he put in the right things.")

"Aren't you glad he wrote that about Charlotte's grandchildren?"

"Yes, and in the letter where he says 'the geese cheered,' that sounds a little like the way he wrote *Charlotte's Web*."

"Yes, but not *Stuart Little*!"

The letter had arrived just as we were finishing *Stuart Little*, for they had quickly ferreted out another book by the same author. Now discussion quickly focused on comparisons of the two books, as it had done several times during the reading of the second book.

"In *Stuart Little* he did some of that naming a lot of names that we thought was so much fun in *Charlotte's Web*, but he didn't do it as much and he didn't do it as good."

"In *Charlotte's Web* he had more ways of saying things so they would be funny." "And," interjected another child, "there were more funny things happening."

"There was more happening in *Charlotte's Web* than in *Stuart Little*. In *Stuart Little* there was more that just went along and along."

"In *Charlotte's Web* it was all one story and it was the same people all the time. In *Stuart Little* it was more like a lot of little stories put together in one book instead of just one long story."

"I like *Stuart Little* better because there was so much where you could imagine things. *Charlotte's Web* told more of what happened, but in *Stuart Little* you could imagine it yourself."

"I didn't like that love stuff in *Stuart Little*!"

"*Stuart Little* didn't seem like a real person, but all of them in *Charlotte's Web* did seem real."

"Well, they were! And *Stuart Little* he made up!"

"He did more interesting things with words in *Charlotte's Web*—like making them rhyme and making the geese talk the way they did and making a lot of names to tell about one thing."

"I don't think Wilbur should have had to live in the manure pile! But I do like *Charlotte's Web* best. I don't think that's a good way to take care of a pig, even in a story."

"Do you think he'll write another story? Do you, Miss N.? *Charlotte's Web* is just right. His letter is just right!"

It had been, indeed, an experience that was "just right." We had discovered a new book and to us a new author. There had been great satisfaction in the fact that the author is a writer for adults as well as for children.

Moreover, we had realized that authors are real, living people; that they, too, like letters; that they may even be encouraged to make more books.

The one book discovered and enjoyed had led us on to another by the same author—to further insights, comparisons, and heightened critical reading. Very rarely, indeed, had they missed any of the subtle implications in *Charlotte's Web*.

We had shared the books and group reading had been good. Not all books are good for reading aloud in a group.

Charlotte's Web had had for the children, in a way that they could recognize them, the truest qualities of real life: humor (and unexpected humor at that), pathos, love and friendship, problems, difficulties, solutions, cleverness, terror, unloveliness, selfish calculation, death, and continuity of generations. Moreover, all these elements were mingled and there were many subtle relationships, as in real life, yet the organization of events was bold enough to enable us to see clearly. The final climax and conclusions were "not too good," to use one of the children's expressions. (He meant that it was not "goody-goody." Perhaps he also felt it was not "too good" to be true.) The resolution was genuine and realistic. While sorrow was poignant it was made acceptable in realism and hopeful in continuity of life.

The group lived together (vicariously, to be sure, but eights are beginning to be quite able to live some life vicariously) through some of the major problems of life. We laughed till we wept, together, and we struggled to hold back tears of sadness with pride that we all could do so.

Then, together, we faced death and accepted it maturely, recognizing the continuity of life.

Finally, at the end of the book, the members of the group were closer to one another than they had ever been. Previously not-quite-acceptable members were now chosen or were chided gently with quotations and one meanly aggressive incident brought, "Aw, don't be Templeton!" then a hearty laugh from everybody which cleared the air.

There were those who wanted to re-read and for themselves. Three families bought copies for family reading aloud. The school copy is now circulating from home to home and family reading is for the moment rediscovered because "it's fun for all of us."

Certainly valuations of books and insights into literature were increasingly clear-sighted. Taste developed. Writing skills and techniques were recognized and pinned down with unabashed comment. Their own letter writing was spontaneous and victorious over technical difficulties. Nor is it mere unrelated happen-so that the eight-year-olds are now revelling in writing stories, stories, stories of their own.

Charlotte's Web will never entirely set us free. As with any good book, having read we will never be the same again. We have all become entangled in the fun and agonies of creative reading and creative writing.

Why Indifference or Hatred toward Poetry?

DAVID WAGONER¹

Only a few members of the typical college or high school graduating class today like poetry, and most of them are ashamed of the fact. Why? They've been exposed to it in grade school, junior high school, high school, and college, perhaps even at home, yet their aim seems to be to forget about it as quickly as possible.

Almost all contacts with poetry after the age of twenty-one are so furtive as to seem illicit. Why? Should the situation be different?

Today I'm going to talk about what I think are the three main why's.

As I see them, here are the three big reasons: first, poetry is introduced to the student as another language; second, poetry is taught to be tested; and third, poetry is looked at only for the sake of explication.

I take a backseat to no one in my admiration for the genius of men like Shelley, Keats, Browning, Tennyson, and so on, but it is their vocabulary and their syntax, and especially the language of their American imitators, that lead students to believe one must talk like that to be poetic.

It wouldn't do any good to walk up to Eddie Guest or James Metcalfe and say, "Boys, nobody talks like that." They wouldn't understand, because they've never known that poetry lies in the currency of the present language. And besides, they've made so much money, they wouldn't want to know.

I'm not saying, like Wordsworth, that

poetry should be written in terms of everyday speech. It can be, but it needn't be. However, even in the most tortuous and elliptic poem, the language of the intelligent man in the street should be just under the surface if not on it.

I cut my teeth on Longfellow, and why that didn't sour me on poetry forever after, I'll never know.

There is no such thing as "poetic" language, as distinct from plain language. But students are never told this. I never was. I assumed, and so did all my classmates, that one had to strike a pose, clear the throat, and begin speaking words as different from what Suzy just whispered to Eloise in the back of the room as high school German is from German.

Then came enforced memorization and recitation. I won't dwell on any of those painful episodes. Very few teachers are guilty of these crimes today. But one of my closest friends was temporarily suspended from high school because he refused to find out why the quality of mercy was not strained, in such an unnecessary way. Now he's a dentist and has no mercy. And, believe me, no poetry.

And so here is one of the origins of hatred. For many young people, poetry from the beginning is made something utterly unrelated to real life. They are embarrassed by having to listen to or speak words that both in meaning and arrange-

¹This is a part of a talk delivered before the North Central Pennsylvania Association of Teachers of English, Oct. 10, 1953.

ment appear foolish, effeminate, or unimportant—or all three. And if, as so often is the case, the teacher is embarrassed too—or worse, if the teacher approaches poetry with a kind of pixie-like delight, the estrangement is complete and final.

My second point is that poetry is taught to be tested, and this is especially true in college literature courses. James Thurber, in an essay titled "Here Lies Miss Grobie," recalls an English teacher he once had whose favorite poem, he was sure, would have been one of Wordsworth's Lucy lyrics if only one of the stanzas had read: "A violet by a mossy stone,/ Half hidden from the eye,/ Fair as a star when ninety-eight/ Are shining in the sky." Because it would have made a very good test question to ask how many stars were in the sky. However, Wordsworth had to go and spoil everything by having only one.

I don't think this is an exaggerated instance. What is a student to do when he is faced by a professor who with a delicately pointed nut-pick goes through poems, prying out the little testable items such as "What kind of look did La Belle Dame Sans Merci give the knight-at-arms?" or "What ocean is Shelley talking about in 'Ode to the West Wind'?" or "In what style did Andrea Del Sarto paint?" or "What kind of grades did Arthur Hallam get in college?" Well, the student must buy a nut-pick too, and almost instantly the poetry disintegrates into a pile of fragments.

Then comes versification. It is a sad and touching sight to see a student maundering through a corridor and hear him mumbling to himself, "ABBA,

ABBA, CDE, CDE," or "ti TUM ti TUM ti TUM ti TUM ti TUM ti TUM." You always know he is going to a test which for him will be something like a fraternity ritual in gibberish, to be unlearned as soon as possible. In what cultural way has he advanced if he is able to define a sonnet or terza rima, complete with ti TUM's, if he has never been helped to experience a sonnet, or any other poem for that matter? If he doesn't know the excitement that skilful versification can produce? If an amazing couplet has never hit him like a hammer blow?

However, he and the professor are caught in the same trap: questions must be answered, grades must be given, and for questions to be answered, there must be questions. A professor cannot very well say, "Which of these three poems or poets do you like best?" and then mark an answer wrong. Or ask, "What images does this line bring to your mind?" and then say, "Incorrect."

Too often in an elementary literature course the same pattern is followed, in this case chiefly in conjunction with the poems themselves. The students are led, snuffing their way along the lines, in search of personal references that can be related to the poet's life. These tiny discoveries are supposed to be important to the understanding of a poem. Perhaps they are. I doubt it. Or the professor, perhaps trembling on the brink of exposing his own love of poetry to the students, retreats entirely into the comparative safety of the poet's life where he is able to hold the attention of the vacant faces by being alternately acid, compassionate, and witty. It's easier to talk about people than about words.

And again, it's easier to ask test questions about poets than about their poems.

What does the student think about poetry after all this? It leads me to my third point, for in this mistake the student's attitude takes its final form:

Poetry is often looked at only for the sake of explication. This, I think, puts the lid on it. That dreadful antichrist, the paraphrase, rears its beastly head.

How often the students are asked to put a poem into their own words. How often the teacher does it for them. It goes without saying that if a poem is good, really good, a paraphrase cannot have any connection with it. A poet, like a shoemaker, works with certain tools: rhythm, sound, imagery, symbol, length of line, punctuation, and fire. A paraphrase takes all these away and leaves only ideas. Poetry is not ideas. But ideas can be taught and tested.

Naturally, with the entire emphasis on meaning, the student tends to forget everything else. And when he finds the meaning, or the teacher finds it for him, the most obvious questions in the world come to his mind: if that's what the guy meant, why didn't he just say it right out in the first place? Why didn't he write it out in a couple of sentences or a paragraph? Why didn't he just write down the idea? In other words, why does the poem have to exist at all?

If, at the end of the discussion of a poem, any of you teachers of English literature have ever been brought up short by such questions, the realization has probably flitted briefly across your minds that

somewhere along the line you stopped talking about the poem; that you left most of it behind to follow a piece of it; that you discarded the verbal trappings on the page and began studying meanings. I think perhaps it should have embarrassed you. Why? Because by your actions, your very processes of teaching, you have shown the student that the poem is unimportant, not worthy of regard in itself. And that's all he needs. He will take his cue promptly and will do three terrible things: one, he will copy the supposed "ideas" of the poem in his notebook and that *will be* the poem for him; two, he will not look at the poem again because he will think he doesn't need to; and three, he will feel a kind of patronizing contempt for it, as he might feel toward a completed crossword puzzle.

A poem is like a piece of sculpture. It exists in reality, there, in the words—not somewhere over there, in an explanation. If a student never learns that it really exists like stone, he will never have a chance to begin to like it.

Those are the present conditions and my opinions on how they got that way. How can they be made different? I hesitate to say. In the first place I'm not at all sure that poetry can be taught, in the strict sense of that word. But if it is to be taught, I think it should be under conditions similar to those found in a music appreciation course; however, even less academic than that.

I think it should begin with ballads, both old and new, some sung or spoken, some on records. I've never known, seen, or heard of a child, an adolescent, or an adult who didn't like songs and stories: two of the principal ingredients of this

kind of poetry—indeed, of all poetry. I would include the ballads of Yeats and Auden with the anonymous kind. I would go from there to some of the tougher, song-like modern lyrics of Cummings, Humphries, MacNiece, Dickinson, Ransom, Yeats, Auden, and Hardy, showing that there need be nothing foolish or effeminate about poetry and that not all of it is written about love; that some of it can be more fierce and staggering than an open-field, head-on tackle or a cross-body block.

And I wouldn't give any tests, though I would have the students write about the poetry, perhaps going on where the poem left off in their minds. And I wouldn't give any grades except passing and failing, as in Composition O. And I would let the students know that anything they say can be poetry if they say it well enough and mean it with all their senses. And the only explanations they would get from me would be on how the poet got his effects through skill or passion or both. And I would always stay with the poem and not go somewhere else. And the students would stay with the words of the poem and not some other words. Then I think more of them would like it, and fewer of them would hate it.

Children like poetry. They make it up on the sidewalks, they chant it at each other when they skip rope or play games, they use it—sometimes viciously—to

make fun of each other. They like poetry the way they like an animal, and they treat it in just about the same way: sometimes they kiss it, sometimes they dance around it, sometimes they pull its tail. But it's always there, an intimate part of their lives. What happens to these children, as they go through grade school, high school, and college, that changes their minds? I'm afraid that too often teachers have taken away the fun, the bite, the singing, the fresh story, and the guts, and have offered them what remained: a little cold water in a cracked cup.

Poetry is inseparable from the heart of man. If it were all to disappear now, this minute, out of the libraries and out of our minds, if suddenly it were all taken away and all references to it were removed—it would all be back again before any person in this room is dead. Or a large part of it would. And in fifty years, the heritage would be as rich as now.

I don't think any student can do without poetry: he can't avoid it. The poetry of the past has not been accidental. It appeared because it was necessary. It will always appear, be written, read, sung, and listened to. Like skin, it's an inescapable and recurring part of us. And I think the reason lies in the fact that it is the most penetrating expression of that god-seeking, highly emotional, imaginative, intellectual mass of whatever-it-is between our ears.

"Thoughts Have Wings"

RUBIE E. SMITH¹

Many and varied are the thoughts that belong to children. Some thoughts are practical, investigating, evaluating, earth-bound ones. Others rise somewhat, and still others are literally on wings as they find expression. It is doubtful if adults ever know how they succeed in freeing children to express their thoughts in their own way or in living with them at school in such a manner that real communication results. After children accept us and show their confidence by sharing thoughts and asking questions, we teachers look back with a sense of awe and try to discover how it came about. Many times one asks himself, "Who am I that I should have the privilege of hearing this child's lovely expression?" The reward for giving time and encouragement to children is indeed a rich one, ever to be received with a feeling of deep gratitude.

It is in a reminiscent mood that this article is written. What were the ways by which those eleven and twelve-year-olds whom I taught a few years ago were freed to write with such enjoyment? What were the subjects they wrote about most often? How did we work to gain new ideas and to find interesting ways of expressing them? How does an adult help children to express thoughts more acceptably, more correctly, without stifling or completely blocking the impulse to communicate? If the answers to such questions as these can be found and presented to prospective teachers, perhaps they may gain sufficient insight to achieve a free exchange of ideas

with and among children somewhat earlier than otherwise they might.

It seems now that it was the relaxed, happy classroom atmosphere that offered the greatest release for creative work—the freedom the children felt to question, to disagree, to suggest, and to chuckle. It was Billy who questioned why my vote was cast as it was on an issue in a stockholders' meeting for Vitamin Village, the fruit store. He said with a lawyer's seriousness, "May I ask why you voted that way?" When he received the answer, he said, "Thank you. I just wanted to know." I was on the losing side, I remember! But there were times when it was necessary for me to make the decision with very firm explanations. This the children accepted, possibly with thoughts such as, "It isn't what I really want to do, but we must do it this way this time." This recognition of authority, and this willingness to receive guidance, were important aspects of our relaxed classroom life. I felt obligated to give reasons for decisions made in order to insure understanding and avoid tensions.

A flexible schedule met incidental happenings that were inevitable. These often resulted in moments of keenest enjoyment. The children had enough time to listen to rain, to feel the first feathery snowflakes, to rustle fall leaves, to taste freshly canned tomato juice, to munch popcorn some child brought, to rest, and to listen to records. We were never too rushed to hear

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the news of a baby calf, to thrill over a football victory at playtime, to listen to a tune on a newly mastered French harp, or to learn the name of a baby brother. If the reading period or the arithmetic time needed to be shifted to another hour in order to give attention to something especially interesting, the change was never questioned.

We adults are willing and anxious to hear the egg pip and to see a new chicken hatch, and yet how often we do not permit a child's idea to emerge when it insistently rings in our ears! It is all too easy for teachers to ignore flexibility, variety, and principles of child growth when arranging the pattern of a school day. And once a daily schedule has been arranged, some of us teachers find it difficult to accept changes, even if they bring vitality and enthusiasm to children's learning.

It seems that when children are accepted as people with thoughts, ideas, opinions, feelings, interests, and doubts; when teachers really like children and respect their needs *and* whims; when together they grow in living democratically and happily—it is then that a relaxed classroom life furnishes the security necessary for children's creative expression. It is then that a child seems to be saying, "I like you and you like me, so I think I'll tell you something."

But there were always those individual children who needed more teacher time, more praise, more hours in the sunshine of approval before they could verbalize their ideas. Group relaxation was not enough for those young people. A way was found to give them the approval and security

they needed. It was not easy, this way of living with Tom and Mary and Susie and Bill *and* forty more children. No substitute for this human need of *human* approval has been found.

It is from the effervescence of children and from a love of life and people that the teacher finds renewed enthusiasm when the day's work leaves her energy at a low level. It is this daily intake of joyful living that helps an adult remain sufficiently enthusiastic to meet the problem filled days of teaching.

Another factor in freeing the children to write was the knowledge that they could say whatever they wanted to say with complete assurance their confidence would not be betrayed. Nothing they wrote was ever read aloud, or shown to anyone, without permission. The thoughts they put on paper were treated as their own prized possessions to be shared with a receptive teacher. She gave sincere help and encouragement—short pencilled notes along a margin, oral praise as a paper was returned, and inquiries about its being read aloud or placed on the bulletin board for others to enjoy.

Perhaps the time element played the greatest part in arousing the creative urge and in giving the children a feeling of freedom. One had time to think about what he wanted to say, time to "play" with descriptive words, time to enjoy and to share choice passages in books or favorite lines of poetry, time to talk about pictures, time to experiment with ways of expressing taste, smell, or feelings, time for fantasy and for fact.

It is difficult to refrain from saying to

a teacher who invariably pleads the lack of time for such experiences, "Now is the time to let such things as these become a part of children while they are yet children." A teacher can not drill appreciations into boys and girls. She need only provide enriching experiences and allow time for leisurely enjoyment. Never shall I forget the red haired little girl who skipped mornings into the room saying, "Give me time to write it down. A poem's ringin' in my head." She wrote many poems that year, but it was some weeks later that we learned she had to have time to write at school because her other hours were filled with making a home for an aged father and a brother. Hers was truly a life of "hyacinths and biscuits," and at the age of eleven! School could very easily have failed to provide the "hyacinths." The fragrance of her creative spirit spread out to sweeten the atmosphere for all the children.

A place to put what one had written was an important part of the plan. A simple box or basket sat on my desk, located there so it would be private. Into this basket came writings in sufficient quantity to make a class book each year, a book named and illustrated by the children. In successive years the names were "Writing Is Fun," "We Have Written," "It's Fun to Write," "The Magic Pen," and "Thoughts Have Wings." The poetry, prose, and class record divisions of "Thoughts Have Wings" were named "Above the Clouds," "Gliding Along," and "Down to Earth." In those books such examples of prose and poetry as the following were kept:

A QUEEN'S DRESS

A cobweb for her lacy mantle,

Lady's slippers for her feet,
Foxgloves for her milk white hands,
A skirt of rose leaves scented sweet,
These are fit for a fairy queen.

A. L. (age 10)

SNOW FAIRIES

At the old farm house upon the hill
When the moon's in the sky,
If you watch carefully you're sure to see
The lovely snow fairies going by.
The waters are lapping
And everything's still,
The fairies are coming
To dance by the mill.

M. D. (age 10)

RED MAPLE

Oh, Red Maple, how did you get your
leaves?
Did you have someone weave them?
Or did a gypsy leave a red dress on your
branches and they fought over it?
Is this how you got your tattered edges?

R. W. M. (age 11)

SPRING FAIRY

There in slumber she did lie
Beneath the cloudy sky,
The fairy princess of the spring,
Waiting for the birds to sing
And waken her from slumber.

A. B. (age 11)

SNOW PALACES

The woods were snow palaces
With dainty ceilings that no sculptor could
have shaped,
With all his tools and skill.
The lacy bushes no weaver could have
woven or draped,
The path was hard and clear.

A. L. (age 10)

POT OF GOLD

How would you like a pot of gold? I
knew you would. Here is what you have to
do. Listen carefully. First, you go to see
Johnny Kite. Ask him if he will take you
up to see Mr. Sun. Then slide down the
sunbeams and you'll land on rainbow end.
You'll find a pot of gold. It is a lot of fun
to do. Do you want to try?

A. B. (age 11)

A DOG

A dog is such a lovely friend with soft brown eyes and a shaggy brown coat; a rough red tongue and a waggy tail; a blackwet nose and a whine that would never be forgotten.

A. B. (age 11)

THE STORM

A storm is made of lightning, thunder, wind, and rain. The wind whistles around corners, down chimneys, in the woods and tears up large oak trees by the roots. The lightning flashes across the sky in zig-zag paths. The thunder booms in the sky like a huge giant clapping his hands.

M. L. H. (age 12)

As is always true, the children's verbal expressions revealed their interests—people, events, animals, home happenings, sports, science. Their writings contained facts, fiction, humor, and pathos. Nearly all the feelings of mankind will one time or another be revealed in the expressions of young mankind. When one realizes that myriad interests are within children's minds already, and that new interests are constantly unfolding, it is easy to see how unnecessary it is to assign topics day after day from lists in textbooks. How deadening this is to minds and souls already overflowing with things they want to say—things they *have* to say, one way or another, one time or another, with or without permission!

How, in retrospect again, did the children grow in improving the quality of their written expression? Of first significance was the concept that improvement must be an individual matter. Each child had to become interested in his own problems of improvement. Corrections were made as simply as possible, always lightly in pencil in order not to mar the child's

paper. Red pencil marks were always avoided. Whether or not a paper was rewritten was the child's decision, and usually he did not rewrite or recopy if corrections left its appearance reasonably neat. If the youngster was unhappy with its appearance, he was encouraged to recopy. In the time spent doing arduous rewriting, perhaps another idea could be phrased with more lasting learning. And what about practice? When several children needed help on the same problem, let us say using the apostrophe to show possession, short periods of practice and explanation were arranged for that group. Textbooks, handbooks, passages in books being read, and other desirable practice materials were used. The test of permanence of learning, however, was in the subsequent written expression of the children, and not in long homework assignments. Drill was done, and recognized by the children, as practice in using accepted and correct forms to say what one wanted to say. It was usually individual, but became available for small or large groups upon an indication of need. The attempt to improve the quality of expression was made, when possible, by means of an indirect rather than a direct approach. Often someone said, "What an interesting way to describe that!" Invariably this motivated a search for colorful words or unusual style.

At eleven and twelve many children have reached almost an adult level in written expression. Editorials, descriptions, letters, stories, conversations, news stories, and poems were found in the basket on my desk. It was seldom necessary to suggest that a child attempt another type of writing. Instead, the desire to try one's hand at

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anything being written by other children seemed very keen. Likewise, there was seldom any necessity for suggesting that a child needed to produce more. Often the children would challenge each other on this matter; however, if a fellow appeared to be loafing there was no hesitancy in suggesting that he go to work.

Since writing was an individual matter, obviously speed of production, difficulty of expression, and presence of ideas were likewise individual matters. Therefore quantity and quality did not become fixed, but instead were individual goals for each child. I remember distinctly an hour in which one child produced a long story involving a basketball tournament and reaching an exciting climax. Another child in the same length of time succeeded in writing only this three-sentence story, and yet what a vivid effect he achieved!

WINTER MORNING

Monday morning when I got out of

bed, I started to feed. The snow crunched under my feet and the bitter wind whistled in my frozen ears. My cold, stiff fingers ached when I took hold of the chain that held the crib door.

W. D. P. (age 14)

As is ever true when children are traveling their own road toward growth in creativity, each child said what he had to say in his own way, in his own time, and at his own level. And I, the teacher? It was my good fortune to receive his expression, to thrill at its charm, and to help him improve. This we can do only if we have the feeling and the knowledge for it—the feeling for children and knowledge of their growth, and the feeling for our language and knowledge of its use. The fusion of these, it seems to me, furnishes the only answer available at present to the problem of helping children grow into adults who can communicate clearly, correctly, and creatively.

Creative Writing as a Psychological Tool

ROBERT D. HALL¹

One of the many benefits of creative writing is the increased understanding of oneself and others. Knowing oneself is where mental health, and consequently, good citizenship begins. Children, as well as adults, enjoy the opportunity to indulge in a little introspection and retrospection, and if provided with an opportunity can reveal some interesting information which can help the adult to understand the child, and the child to understand himself. Following is a resume of a specific instance in

which creative writing was used for the purpose of developing better mental health. It is intended merely as an example of what can be done, and could be adapted to the needs of any age group.

Background

I could see that there was a need for my students to think, to exchange ideas, to find out the "why" of things, and creative writing seemed to lend itself perfectly. I

¹Supervising teacher in the Campus School of Buffalo State Teachers College.

had the advantage of having the same children for two years. It was marvelous to see them change, and grow physically, mentally, and emotionally; to see them daily in their various moods—nervous, quiet, sad, happy, angry, noisy—each with his individual problems, his own special dilemma, mixed up, searching for a direction, seeking an answer to the perplexities in his personal life and the world around him.

I wish to stress the point that many months were spent in simple discussion. There was never a day that went by that we did not discuss a new idea, or a new way of looking at and appreciating things, evaluating life and the art of living, thinking about how the seasons changed, how all living things change; how plants, animals, and people go through numerous stages in their development—that there is a right and wrong time for all action—simply a matter of readiness.

Sometimes, our discussions were motivated by a proverb or quotation from literature which I made a practice of putting on the board frequently. Often these quotes were discussed immediately, and other times they were left until they could be utilized to greatest advantage. Both my students and I brought in newspaper articles on topics ranging from jet planes to modern psychology. These were articles that would appeal to adults, and therefore appealed to them. Often an incident in class or experience of some particular student provoked discussion on getting along with people, the need for attention and success in the life, self-discipline, jealousy, fear, effect of failure on people, need for love, moderation in all things, causes of

juvenile delinquency, and good citizenship in and out of school.

There was no specific time set aside for discussion. It usually occurred spontaneously when there was a need for it. The length depended entirely on the interest span of the class and, therefore, might be brief or become intense enough to hold them for a whole period. The topics chosen to write on were the result of our discussion, and were indicative of the emotional needs of the children.

Some of their comments on our topics were:

I sure enjoy the compositions you assign us. Kids get bored writing about Spring and their pets. These topics are interesting and make us feel more grown up. I often wonder how you think some of them up, because they seem hard at first, but when you start writing, there is really more to write about on these than others . . . They made me look at myself and think quite a bit. . . Besides just learning how to tell a verb from a noun, we learned how to express ourselves. One boy even asked, "What are we going to write on next? When is our next comp. due?"

Results

The motivation for one of our first topics was the fact that certain members of the class had poor behavior patterns. There was a need for improved citizenship. Since there is a definite correlation between mental health and good citizenship, it was decided to explore the causes of behavior—the idea being that if one knows the reason for moods, they are easier to control. Therefore, our first topic was "My Changing Moods for a Day—How They Change and Why They Change."

In the following example, one girl has realized that she can create a positive

mood, or in a larger sense happiness, through her own efforts:

I like to laugh because it changes me and makes me feel different inside. When I'm happy, it is usually because I have accomplished something I'm proud of.

This boy knows that moods may be changed by other people and events:

I was mad at the bus driver because he was late and myself for leaving my gloves at home. But when I got into my homeroom, saw the Christmas tree, and heard the carols, I felt good inside.

Here we find an awareness of the effect that physical condition has on moods:

If you go to bed late and have to get up early, you are grumpy and grouchy and feel that you have the cares of the world on your shoulders.

Another boy is cognizant of the fact that while a sense of failure or frustration creates a bad mood, it can be overcome by a little humor:

When I started to make my eggs for breakfast, the eggs splattered all over the place and I got mad. On the way to school, my father cracked some jokes, and I started laughing and was happy again. Fundamentally, most of the children realized, as evidenced in their writing, that one's environment, actions, and interactions with other people changed and modified their moods and consequently their behavior.

Since behavior is a natural result of moods, we drifted on to the question—"Why Do People Do Unkind Things?" I have merely chosen statements from their writing, in answer to this question. Notice the range of human emotions they have recorded: pride, revenge, jealousy, envy, need for love and attention, self pity, self discipline, and selfishness. Here again is proof that they have looked deep inside themselves in addition to observing others and interpreting vicarious experiences.

In many cases people want revenge because they have been given poor treatment . . . Some people do not mean to be unkind, but they cannot control themselves; they just let themselves do whatever they want to . . . There are people who do mean things because they feel sorry for themselves . . . Sometimes people hurt others to get on top; these people usually find themselves standing alone and without many friends . . . Others do mean things because they cannot attract attention any other way. Very often a person isn't socially acceptable because he is unintelligent, physically unattractive, in poor health or is not well adjusted to other people, and will react in this way . . . Some people do mean things because it makes them feel superior . . . I think people do unkind things because they haven't had love and affection from other people.

They have not only discovered some basic psychological principles, but notice how many times one can read between the lines and see a child recognizing his own problems, the reasons for them, and objectively recording his reactions to them. In many cases there was better emotional adjustment and improved behavior patterns.

The end of the school year was rapidly approaching. I had had these children for two years, and they were fast growing up. I wondered if they were aware of the changes that had taken place in them during that time as much as I was. I asked them to write on the physical, mental, and emotional changes that had taken place in their lives in the last two years.

Following are typical responses:

I think I might have grown a little stronger, because my father won't wrestle with me anymore . . . I have changed from a short boney little girl to a tall and a little fatter girl . . . I have greater responsibilities and, therefore, greater interest in life around me . . . Before, I used to hate

to sew or cook—now I love it. . . Boys seem more attractive and interesting than just being pests that were put on this earth to torment us girls. . . Before I was twelve, I didn't care much at all about my clothes. It didn't matter, particularly if they were pressed, or if blue and green didn't go well together. . . Now I can see and understand the reasoning behind some of Mother and Dad's decisions. . . I realize that crying will not solve any problems. . . I used to think I knew everything, but now I'm beginning to listen to what other people say. . . I used to think about playing all the time, but now I only play half the time and the rest is for my duties around the house and school work. . . I notice that I read the newspapers more often. . . Now I enjoy dancing and get together like older people do.

These young people have become aware that they go through different stages in their development—that in each stage their interests, abilities, physical characteristics, goals, obligations, ways of meeting problems and sense of values change. For instance the more privileges they are allowed, the greater the responsibilities. There is penetrating self-examination in evidence here, in that they can see how and why they changed and improved, and how they must develop themselves in the future.

In life, success and failure comes to everyone on a day to day, minute to minute basis. What is their effect on the lives of people? How may they be handled wisely? This was the next question we were concerned with. The effect of television and movies was obvious in some of their writing, as evidenced by the fact that they stated frequently that those who fail sometimes turn to drink and crime. Also apparent in their writing was the influence of Kipling's poem "If," which we read and discussed in class.

Here are their opinions on this subject:

While many people reach success in business and become rich, they never really realize the success of being happy. . . A love of life and all the beauty of the earth is more important than being the richest person. . . If you can meet success and still keep your sense of values, then you are truly rich—not just rich in the sense of money, but rich in life. . . Very often the only way you can have success is through failure in some way. . . Success can sometimes be just as much a curse as failure, because it can make people domineering and egotistical; sometimes it can make them humble and thankful. . . If you want to be a success, you must have faith in yourself. . . When people become failures, they don't know what to do because they are lost in a world of success. . . People who are going to be a real success are the ones who stand on their own two feet and work for what they get. . . If a man has failed, but is free, he can start over again and leave his past behind him. This is the way the people who started our country felt. . . Many people dream of becoming famous and rich, but when they fail they are heart broken and can't figure out why. When they forget their day dreams and get down to business and really work, they become a success not in what they dreamed of, but in a job they are qualified to do. . . Failure of a person's parents sometimes makes the children try harder to make something of themselves. . . The world would be a better place to live in if the successful people would help those who are failures.

If these young people had, or could develop enough self-discipline to practice the excellent philosophy evident in these quotes, they would be well equipped to face the normal ups and downs of living and turn them to advantage. As a consequence of this study, I asked myself if there had been an opportunity in our work for each child to realize success, since a feeling of achievement and adequacy is a

necessary prerequisite to mental health and, therefore, good citizenship.

In our discussions, we often touched on the future—what we thought it held regarding world peace, scientific advances, food problems in underdeveloped areas, importance of learning foreign languages, the gap between moral and technological advancement, the fact that life is too short for anything but good will and happiness among individuals and nations, that it is their duty as citizens to live according to high moral standards, that the energies of people and the natural resources of the earth are wasted in war. More specifically, we talked about what the future held for them, and just where they fitted into the world of work—what they could do every day to make their dreams for the future come true.

Most of their writing was quite realistic. They stressed the importance of preparing now. The influence of the guidance department was obvious here.

The girls mentioned specialized interests such as helping at home with the housework, cooking, sewing, budgeting, baby sitting and taking pride in personal appearance. All were interested in some of the following:

To be able to talk with and understand people. . . to take pride in what one does . . . to have fun while striving for goals. . . to benefit from mistakes. . . to learn to speak well and write correctly. . . to choose the right subjects in school. . . to gather information about one's profession. . . to take life as it comes and not lose one's temper. . . to face responsibility. . . to be a good sport. . . to keep strong and in good health. . . to develop high moral standards . . . to get along with people.

Values

The work in creative writing was an especially rewarding experience for all of us. As shown by the results of these few topics, we find that creative writing can be used as an effective "psychological tool." It can furnish an outlet for thoughts, ideas, and inner tensions. Their writing was punctuated with much wisdom for their age. They had an opportunity to analyze the personal values by which they lived.

Some of their problems were resolved and their understanding of themselves and others made more complete. Because of this increased emotional adjustment, there was a better relationship established between the teacher and students and among the students themselves—in other words, better citizenship. This, in turn, resulted in greater learning.

Our discussions, preceding the writing, helped the children develop a sense of importance because each person's thoughts and ideas were taken seriously. Later the experience of reading their compositions to the class for constructive criticism provided an opportunity for the class and the teacher to praise them on their work, thus producing a feeling of success and adding much to their confidence and poise. It also inspired them to put their best selves forward and to express themselves with their richest and most effective vocabulary.

This experience in creative writing was a success, in that it did promote better citizenship, sharpened the children's powers of observation and self analysis—in short, made them think—which after all is the primary purpose of education.

Storybooks that Appeal to Kindergarten Children

DAN CAPPA¹

The storybook is a part of every child's life. Kindergarten children are greatly influenced by what is read to them. Imagination is stimulated, ideas are formed or modified, and experiences are widened through literature as well as through actual living.

In recent years, the interest in children's literature has grown with amazing rapidity. Today there are so many books for children that it is difficult to choose among them. How does one evaluate storybooks and make choices? One important way of evaluating storybooks as to their appeal to kindergarten children is to observe how the children actually react to the books. This method was used in obtaining the lists of appealing books included in this article.

The two lists that follow are based on an investigation made by the writer of the reactions of more than 2500 kindergarten children in Contra Costa County, California.² The reactions were obtained from at least ten of the classes totaling 300 or more pupils per storybook. The 443 different books used in the research study, selected for diversity of story types and

within the kindergarten age-range, were found in one or more of six book lists. Every valid return for each storybook used in the investigation was assigned an A, B, or R rating. A story book was rated "A" if it was enjoyed by all the children; "B" if it was enjoyed by all the children except a few; and "R" if it was rejected by most children.

List I contains the authors and titles of storybooks with all valid returns rated "A". These books were enjoyed by all the children with no observed negative reactions. In fact, the books appealed to the children because in most cases the chief character was either a human or an animal; the story type was either fanciful or one that could happen; the illustrations were numerous and well-done; and the story content was interesting. Eighty-three stories were in the category of universal appeal to kindergarten children.

¹Principal of the John Marsh School, Antioch, California.

²Dante Cappa, "Reactions of Kindergarten Children to Story Books Read by Teachers," (unpublished Doctor's dissertation, The University of California, Berkeley, 1953).

List I

Storybooks Enjoyed by All the Kindergarten Children

Author	Title
Bannon, Laura	Red Mittens
Barrett, Laurence	Twinkle, the Baby Colt
Barrick, Kenneth	On the Farm
Beim, Jerrold	Andy and the School Bus
Braun, Esther	Bobbie and Donnie Were Twins
Brice, Tony	Little Hippo and His Red Bicycle

Author	Title
Brown, Margaret W.	Indoor Noisy Book
Brown, Margaret W.	Little Chicken
Brown, Margaret W.	Noisy Book
Brown, Margaret W.	The Seashore Noisy Book
Brown, Margaret W.	The Sleepy Little Lion
Brown, Paul	Puff Ball
Bryan, Dorothy	Frisky Finding a Home
Bryan, Dorothy	Michael Who Missed His Train
Bryant, Sara	Epaminondas and His Auntie
Carroll, Ruth	What Whiskers Did
Daugherty, James	Andy and the Lion
Davis, Alice	Timothy Turtle
Demers, Joe	Taffy
Dennis, Wesley	Flip
Duplaix, Georges	The Big Brown Bear
Evers, Helen	Crybaby Calf
Evers, Helen	Fussbunny
Evers, Helen	Monkeyface
Evers, Helen	Sloppy Joe
Flack, Marjorie	Angus and the Ducks
Flack, Marjorie	Angus Lost
Flack, Marjorie	Away Goes Jonathan Wheeler
Flack, Marjorie	Topsy
Flack, Marjorie	William and His Kitten
Flack, Marjorie	Friskey, Margaret
Willy Nilly	Johnny and the Monarch
Friskey, Margaret	Johnny Cottontail
Friskey, Margaret	Surprise on Wheels
Gay, Romney	Cinder
Gay, Romney	Cinder's Secret
Gay, Romney	Funny Noise
Gay, Romney	A Joke on Cinder
Hader, Berta	Cock-a-Doodle-Do
Hader, Berta	Whiffy McMan
Hall, William	The Shoelace Robin
Hogan, Inez	About Nono, the Baby Elephant
Hoke, Helen	Furry Bear
Hoke, Helen	Fuzzy Kitten
Hoke, Helen	The Fuzzy Puppy
Hurd, Clement	The Merry Chase
Jahn, Mary L.	Deedo and Fawny
Jahn, Mary L.	Yelly
Kinert, Reed	Little Helicopter
Lawrence, Anne	Where is Christopher
Lenski, Lois	Animals for Me
Lenski, Lois	The Little Fire Engine
Lenski, Lois	Surprise for Davy
Lindman, Maj.	Flicka, Ricka, Dicka and the Three Kittens
Lindman, Maj.	Snipp, Snapp, Snurr and the Buttered Bread
Mabie, Peter	The Little Duck Who Loved the Rain
MacGregor, Ellen	Tommy and the Telephone
MacIntyre, Elizabeth	Ambrose Kangaroo, a Story that Never Ends
Meeks, Esther	One is the Engine

ELEMENTARY ENGLISH

Author	Title
Milius, Winifred	Here Comes Daddy
Misch, Robert	At Daddy's Office
Newberry, Clare	Cousin Toby
Paullin, Ellen	Karen Is Three
Payne, Emmy	Katy No-Pocket
Puner, Helen	Daddies, What They Do All Day
Raymond, Nancy	Forgetful Bear
Raymond, Nancy	Unhappy Rabbit
Rey, H. A.	Curious George
Rey, Margaret	Pretzel
Sage, Juniper	The Man in the Manhole
Scott, Sally	Silly Billy
Shaw, Charles	It Looked Like Spilt Milk
Slobodkina, Esphyr	Caps for Sale
Smith, Virginia	Little Jamie's Christmas
Steiner, Charlotte	Kiki and Muffy
Steiner, Charlotte	The Sleepy Quilt
Sterling, Helen	The Horse that Takes the Milk Around
Stevens, Richard	Zipper the Zany
Tensen, Ruth	Come to the Zoo
Williams, G.	Timid Timothy
Willis, Fritz	Jelly and George
Zimmerman, Naoma	The Newcomer
Zimmerman, Naoma	The Sleepy Forest

List II contains the authors and titles of storybooks with predominantly A ratings, but having a few B ratings. These were books enjoyed by most of the kinder-

garten children but produced a number of negative reactions from a few children. There were 103 storybooks in the category of appeal to most kindergarten children.

List II
Storybooks Enjoyed by Most Kindergarten Children

Author	Title
Adelson, Leona	Who Blew That Whistle
Avery, Kay	Wee Willow Whistle
Bannerman, Helen	Sambo and the Twins
Bannerman, Helen	Story of Little Black Sambo
Barksdale, Lena	Milly and Her Dogs
Beatty, Hetty	Topsy
Begg, John	Two Little Tigers and How They Flew
Beim, Jerrold	Twelve O'Clock Whistle
Beistle, Mary	"I Spy"
Beskow, Elsa	Pelle's New Suit
Bonino, Louise	The Cozy Little Farm
Bright, Robert	Georgie
Brooks, Leslie	Story of the Three Bears
Brown, Margaret W.	The Golden Egg Book
Brown, Margaret W.	Goodnight Moon
Brown, Margaret W.	Little Fireman
Brown, Margaret W.	The Little Fisherman
Brown, Paul	Merrylegs, the Rocking Pony

Bryan, Dorothy
Burton, Virginia

Burton, Virginia
Chalmers, Audrey
Chalmers, Audrey
Clark, Margery
Crampton, Gertrude
DeAngeli, Marguerite
Deihl, Enda
Demers, Joe
Dennis, Wesley
DeWitt, Johanna
Duvoisin, Roger
Ets, Marie
Evans, Katherine
Evers, Helen
Evers, Helen
Flack, Marjorie
Flack, Marjorie
Flack, Marjorie
Flack, Marjorie
Flack, Marjorie
Friskey, Margaret
Friskey, Margaret
Gag, Wanda
Garbutt, Katherine
Garner, Elvira
Garrett, Helen
Gay, Romney
Gay, Romney
Geis, Darlene
Gramatky, Hardie
Green, Mary
Greene, Jean
Hall, William
Heal, Edith
Howard, Constance
Hogan, Inez
Hogan, Inez
Hogan, Inez
Hogan, Inez
Hoke, Helen
Ipcar, Dahlov
Johnston, Eileen
Jonathan, (Stein, Monte)
Krauss, Ruth
Leaf, Munro
LeFevre, Felicite
Lenski, Lois
Lenski, Lois
Lenski, Lois
Lenski, Lois

There Was Tammie
Choo Choo the Story of a Little Engine
Who Ran Away
Katy and the Big Snow
I Had a Penny
A Kitten's Tale
Poppy Seed Cakes
Scuffy, the Tugboat
Ted and Nina Have a Happy Rainy Day
The Little Dog That Would Not Wag His Tail
Sugarfoot and the Merry-go-Round
Flip and the Cows
The Littlest Reindeer
Donkey, Donkey
In the Forest
The Ladybug Who Couldn't Fly Home
Copy Kitten
Moonymouse
The Boats on the River
The Story About Ping
Tim Tadpole and the Great Bull Frog
Wag-Tail Bess
Wait for William
Chipmunk Moves
Today We Fly
Nothing At All
Baby Orang and Junior
Little Cat Lost
Angelo, the Naughty One
The Tale of Jeremy Gray
Toby and Sue
The Little Train that Won a Medal
Little Toot
Everybody Eats
The Forgetful Elephant
Watch the Puppy Grow
The Downy Duck
The Twins and Tabiffa
Kangaroo Twins
Nappy Chooses a Pet
Twin Deer
Twin Kids
Rag's Day and Mrs. Silk
Animal Hide and Seek
Jamie and the Fire Engine
Daddy and Me
The Carrot Seed
Story of Ferdinand
The Cock, the Mouse and the Little Red Hen
Davy's Day
The Little Airplane
The Little Auto
Little Farm

Author	Title
Lenski, Lois	The Little Sail Boat
Lindman, Maj.	Flicka, Ricka, Dicka and the Little Dog
Lindman, Maj.	Flicka, Ricka, Dicka and Their New Friend
Lister, Marion	Big Brother and Little Brother
MacDonald, Golden	Little Lamb Lost
Maloy, Lois	Toby Can Fly
Mason, Miriam	Hoppity
McCloskey, Robert	Make Way for Ducklings
Miller, Jane	Linda Just Right
Mills, Freya	Susan's Surprise
Monsell, Helen	Paddy's Christmas
Nelson, Faith	Randolph, the Bear Who Said "No"
Newberry, Clare	Mittens
Paullin, Ellen	This Little Boy Went to Kindergarten
Potter, Beatrix	Tale of Peter Rabbit
Reed, Mary	The Shy Little Kitten
Rey, H. A.	Curious George Takes a Job
Rey, H. A.	Where's My Baby
Robinson, Irene	Picture Book of Animal Babies
Robinson, Tom	Buttons
Robinson, Tom	Mr. Red Squirrel
Sewell, Helen	Blue Barns
Skaar, Grace	All About Dogs, Dogs, Dogs
Snow, Dorothea	At the Zoo
Snow, Dorothea	Fun at Home
Steiner, Charlotte	Daddy Comes Home
Steiner, Charlotte	A Surprise for Mrs. Bunny
Swift, Hildegard	The Little Red Lighthouse and the Great Gray Bridge
Weil, Ann	The Very First Day
Whitehead, Roberta	Peter Opens the Door
Willis, Fritz	Cancan
Willis, Fritz	Clover
Willis, Fritz	Me Too

The two lists constitute a guide for the selection and utilization of storybooks

which appeal to children of kindergarten ages.

The University of Dacca in East Pakistan is desperately in need of textbooks for its students. Dr. Stanley Maron, lecturer in philosophy and the only American member of the permanent staff, writes that a student coming to Dacca from the villages finds himself crowded four to a room in the dormitories and forced to attend classes in temporary sheds and overcrowded laboratories. The average student bears these hardships with grim determination to secure an education, but there is one obstacle which he cannot surmount alone—the lack of

books. His budget will not permit him to purchase many, and foreign textbooks are far too expensive, even if they were available.

Dr. Maron writes that American students can help by sending their unwanted books to their fellow students at the University of Dacca. The dearth is so great that anything will be welcome if it is at all educational.

Books should be sent with an appropriate gift label c/o Dr. Stanley Maron, 70-C Azimpura, Dacca, East Pakistan.

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Reading Development of Gifted Children

RUTH STRANG¹

The development of a child's reading ability is a prelude and a prerequisite to his personal development through reading. It is a means to an end, not an end in itself. Without adequate reading proficiency, the child lacks access to a most important avenue of learning. This is especially true in the case of gifted children, most of whom have a special aptitude for gaining knowledge from printed sources.

Studies of gifted children have referred briefly to (1) the early age at which they learn to read, (2) their exceptional interest in reading, (3) their precocity in reading adult books, (4) their intensive reading in particular fields. Reference has also been made to deviations from these general tendencies. There are case studies of gifted children who used reading as an escape from social situations to which they were making a poor adjustment, and of other gifted children who were retarded in reading development.

In order to document these generalizations more fully, and to supply needed information on how gifted children read, the author made a study of the reading autobiographies of fifty-four seventh, eighth, and ninth grade pupils with IQ's of 120 or over.² These reading autobiographies yielded a wealth of introspective reports on the reading interests and methods of gifted children.

Gifted children learn to read early. According to Terman's study of gifted children, 43 per cent learn to read before going to school; 20 per cent learn to read before five; 6 per cent, before four; and 2 per cent, before three years

of age. About the same proportions were found in this study. About half of the pupils said they learned to read when they were five years old or younger. One youngster with an IQ of 160 wrote, "I looked at pictures when I was one and read simple books at three. They were easy books with words such as *at, to, for, with, come, I, it*, etc." A child living in a foreign country became interested in reading long before she started to go to school. "I finally got my older sister to teach me to read," she said, "because I felt alone when everyone else could read and I couldn't. At that time I was a mere four years of age, so I couldn't read particularly well." A girl with an IQ of 134 first learned to read when she was five years of age. Her parents taught her to pronounce each letter; she says, "Since I was very fortunate in knowing how to sound out my words, reading was never very difficult."

How do gifted children learn to read? A few somehow learn all by themselves to associate printed words with meanings. As one boy with an IQ of 136 said, "I got interested in books and read them; that was all there was to it."

Most of the gifted boys and girls who wrote these reading autobiographies report that they were taught by various methods, by parents, grandparents, brothers, sisters, or teachers. Many said that their parents read to them at an early age. Following are the methods mentioned, in order of frequency:

Sounding out words. (It may be that the phonetic approach is more appropriate for the quick-learning than for the slow-learning child because of the former's greater analytical ability.) One girl wrote: "Teachers of today are doing a very fine job of teaching children to

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²Obtained through the cooperation of Dr. Virginia Bailard, Supervisor of Guidance and Psychological Services and of certain teachers in the Long Beach, California, Schools.

read, but I do think they could pay more attention to phonics, the reason being that the children could figure out more new words by themselves."

Use of flash cards

Memorizing common words; learning words at sight, thus building up a basic vocabulary

Associating word with picture

Learning words in simple sentences, booklets, newspaper headlines, signs, self-teaching workbooks, first grade readers.

The variety of their early reading experiences is best illustrated by quotations from their reading autobiographies.

At first they memorized words:

"My mother and father were firm believers that books play a very important part in a child's life. When I was about one or two years old my mother or father read to me every night and afternoon. After a month or two of constant reading of my favorite stories over and over, or the reading of a poem, I learned them by memory. I was about four when I would sit down by myself, and telling by the pictures which the poem or story presented, I would act like I was reading. Soon I could distinguish words or sound them out. I believe I owe my interest in reading to my parents who showed me the world of books."

"At the ripe old age of five I got my first library card. Mother said that in first grade I could read fairly well. That was when I carried nineteen books home from that library, and when asked why I didn't get more, I replied, 'Because I couldn't carry any more.' If Mother read a short book to me before I really could read I could repeat it nearly word for word from memory. My sister has the same kind of memory."

"As I remember, the way I learned how to

read was by sight: (1) look at the word, (2) know its meaning, and (3) remember it."

"In first grade, after learning the basic words such as *it, was, were, have, had, spot, puff, Dick, Jane, mother, father*, and others, I zipped right along. I remember reading a book *I Know a Secret*, which was supposed to be hard for my age."

Soon they began to take a more analytical approach:

"How did I learn to read? First my grandma taught me, then I caught on to certain words and got accustomed to sounding out words."

"By very small words and sentences. Also by syllables and the letter's sound."

"In first grade the teacher was dismissed for teaching phonetics, but I think phonetics has helped me very much in sounding out new words. In second grade my teacher implanted a love for reading."

Having acquired a basic sight vocabulary and mastered word recognition skills, they began to read extensively.

If they were not reading up to capacity, the wise teacher helped them individually:

"I lost my reading interest in third and fourth and don't remember reading anything of importance until I came to Lowell in the fifth grade. There, I was given a standard reading test. My score came out 3.3, which wasn't good. My teacher seeing this got after me. Every spare minute of the day for weeks she made me read. It paid off, for in June of the same grade, I took another test. This time my score came out 9.6."

For these bright children, a special literature group was stimulating and enjoyable:

"In the sixth grade I was in a special literature group which covered the different classifications of literature. In this class we made oral reports on the books we had read for a week

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and we made notebooks on these books. We also gave two assemblies in which we gave dramatizations of the books, and at one time made a tape recording, that was broadcast over the air."

Judging from these reports, gifted children learn to read when they become aware of "the delights that lie between the covers of books." First they build up a basic sight vocabulary by associating printed words with meanings and remembering these meanings. Before long they learn word recognition skills that enable them to be "on their own in reading." From then on, the extent of their reading is determined by their interest and the time available.

What do gifted children read? Their reading interests in the lower grades are not very different from those of other children. Before coming to school they look at picture books, read or listen to Mother Goose rhymes, read "The Little Red Hen," "The Three Bears," and other simply written children's favorites.

Their first grade reader makes a greater impression on them than their supplementary reading of *Peter Cottontail*, *I Know a Secret*, and other easy books. In the second grade they frequently mention reading simple animal stories. Some of them begin to get interested in the Billy and Blaze, the Wilder, or the Barbar series.

Their reading interests expand in the third grade with more animal stories, the Betsy series, the *Wizard of Oz*, and *Curious George*. Some of them begin to read factual material—astronomy, *We Went with Marco Polo*, *The Book of Knowledge*. In the fourth grade they read more of the series books—the Willard Schultz and Enright series, *Nancy Drew*, *Clara Barton*, *Silver Chief*, *Doctor Dolittle*, *The Mercer Boys*, *Bobbsy Twins*. In addition they read *Homer Price*, *Kit Carson*, *Alice n Wonderland*, *Rabbit Hill*, and books by Kate Seredy.

In the fifth and sixth grades they are still

interested in animal stories such as *War Horse*, *King of the Wind*, *Call of the Wild*, *Lad, a Dog*; humorous books such as *Mr. Popper's Penguins* and *Mary Poppins*; and adventure stories such as *Robinson Crusoe*, *Treasure Island*, *The Oregon Trail*, *Bride in the Solomons*. A few were reading quite extensively in science.

In the seventh grade the girls begin to be interested in romantic stories—*Seventeenth Summer*, *The Dancing Heart*, *Marie Antoinette*. They like teen-age stories very much. Boys read *Tom Sawyer* and *Huckleberry Finn*, sport stories, mysteries. Interest in mysteries and suspense stories was expressed as follows by a girl with an IQ of 139: "My reading interest varies, but it rotates around books that are exciting to the end—books, that while I am reading, I don't want to put down because of their mysterious or adventurous stories."

Another girl described her progression of reading interests as follows: "I have checked out books for pleasure ever since I was in the third grade. Up until then we weren't allowed to check books out from our school library. In the third grade I can remember reading the Betsy series. In the fourth grade I can remember *The Good Master*, *The Singing Tree*, the Wilder series, the Enright series, and part of the Doctor Doolittle series. In the fifth grade, *Indian Captive* and *Black Beauty*.

A youngster with an IQ of 160 developed an early interest in more mature reading matter: "At seven I was reading animal stories; at nine I took a test at school and had a fourteen year reading level. Now I don't know what my reading level is, but I have read books such as *Scaramouche*, *Mysterious Island*, *Ivanhoe*, Charles and Mary Lamb's *Tales of Shakespeare*, *One Hundred Narrative Poems*, and *One Hundred Famous Poems*.

The following quotation gives insight not only into the reading interests of a gifted boy, but also into his concern about reading devel-

opment and personal development through reading: "Adventurous and humorous stories thrill me. In finding books that I might like, I go by the author. When I find a book to my liking, I obtain other books by that author. The reason for this is that his other books are bound to be somewhat the same. One trouble with me is that I read too many fiction stories and not enough non-fiction books. I suppose you would receive the same practice in reading and vocabulary expanding, but by reading non-fiction stories it would increase your knowledge of authentic happenings and facts, besides making you a well-rounded person. Another of my difficulties is a vocabulary difficulty. Many times when I come to a word with an unknown meaning on my part, I do not stop and look it up to discover the meaning, but skip over it. This does not only not increase my vocabulary, but I do not get the full meaning of the sentence."

Specialized interests begin to emerge as the boys and girls grow older: "I like science books, especially those concerning biology, nuclear physics, and medicine. I also like books on foreign languages, especially Spanish and German."

These youngsters frequently express their appreciation of authors: "I think Mr. Terhune's books are wonderful." "I owe all the authors whose books I've read a debt of gratitude."

How much do they read? It is well known that gifted children are great readers. In their reading autobiographies they make comments such as these: "I spend much of my free time reading," "I read more than anything else," "I spend half my time in reading," "About an hour or so a day," "About one and a half to two hours a day," "As much as possible when I have time." The writer estimates that they read from three to twenty hours per week. Only a few say that they read "very little," or "not very much."

How do they feel about reading? The following quotations express very well their attitudes toward reading and their concept of the relation of reading to other activities:

"I think reading is one of the best pastimes because it never ends."

"Compared to other activities I read about half an hour to an hour a day. I love to read and I think, given the chance, I could read for hours at a time, but of course other activities must be taken care of."

"I love to read, I read much more than I do other pleasurable recreations. To me, though, a book has to be interesting. If I get an uninteresting book, it takes me a week to make myself read a couple of chapters, but if I obtain an interesting book, I read it in a single sitting."

"I would say I spend about one fourth as much time reading as I spend in sports. I read quite slowly when I am reading for pleasure although I can increase my reading speed if I must."

"Now in seventh grade I belong to Revelers, Campfire Girls, Y-Teens, 3-Star Club, write to about twenty people, and take knitting, piano, and oboe lessons, so my interest in reading is slowing down. But I still say, give me a good book any time."

Despite the pull of social activities, radio, television, and auto-riding, these gifted children find considerable time for reading. This is because they find reading an enjoyable and rewarding experience which challenges their active minds and satisfies their desire for knowledge.

Do they have difficulty in getting the books they want? The majority say they never or seldom have difficulty in getting the books they want. Many of them have the books they want at home or are able to buy them. A few mention these difficulties:

Librarian said book wanted was too advanced

Not enough current books in library

Difficult to get books you want because everyone else wants them, too

Not enough books by favorite authors

Difficult to find enough books on hobbies.

In their own words:

"One trouble with the library is that I'd find a good author who wrote books I would like to read, and what do you know, there is not another book in the library by him."

"I have difficulty getting articles on archeology. There are only three in our library. There are probably dozens in the big libraries, but I am new to this neighborhood and don't know my way around."

What are their reading habits? Most of them like to be physically comfortable while they read and are aware of the importance of having good light. Some of them describe reading methods that are, on the whole, sound and mature:

"I am a fast reader, and I usually skim over the pages, picking out the interesting words and sentences. I like to be in a very relaxed position when I read."

"The way I read most of the time is: First I glance through the book to see whether or not it looks interesting, if so, I read the first couple of paragraphs. If it is boring, I discard the book; if it is interesting, I usually start reading and finish the book."

"What generally are my reading habits? Usually in choosing a book I am very choosy. If I feel that I want information I will be found delving into the non-fiction type book. But occasionally, though not very often, I have some leisure at hand, so to arouse some interest I will read a fiction book. I happen to be very critical as to the fiction books I read, and I usually read very well-known novels. In a fiction book, once I start, I read continuously until either the book ends or until an interruption interferes."

What are their suggestions to teachers? These gifted children have three main suggestions for teachers:

1. Make interesting literature available; help pupils to choose their books; encourage them to read in order to find and widen their interests.

One way of arousing pupils' interest in a book is to read certain parts of it aloud. Said one boy: "Get them interested in books of interesting quality but yet of value so they will gain knowledge while enjoying themselves."

Another pupil wrote: "My interests in books are not usually confined to one subject. This year my different teachers have influenced my interests in reading. One has gotten me interested in composers' lives and another has encouraged me to read biography and fiction on many different topics which are very interesting."

2. Allow more time for reading in class; have free reading periods. Some recommended short book reports.

3. Teach good reading methods; "make reading alive and real to the student and not something you have to learn like the multiplication table." One girl wrote:

"If I were a teacher and wanted to help my pupils to read their best, I'd encourage them to read more slowly and to try and prevent themselves from letting their attention wander from the book, but most of all I would explain to them that reading rates may be slowed down by letting the eyes reread what has already been read."

What is the general pattern of reading development of gifted children? Gifted children usually like media of communication that give exercise to their alert minds. Books demand more thought and give more stimulus to the imagination than do media in which ideas are pictured or interpreted by the voice of a speaker.

Their reading interests are broad. When they are very young, they enjoy children's books—the boys' and girls' series as well as children's

classics. They make the transition, sometimes abruptly, to adult fiction. In that inbetween stage while they are making the transition from childhood to adulthood they like teen-age stories very much. More of these stories dealing with problems of family and boy-girl relations, vocational plans, and other adolescent interests are now being written.

They learn to read by all of the methods now in use. To some of these students the phonetic approach made a special appeal, perhaps because it helped them to be on their own in reading and was suitable to their analytical minds.

Reading contributes to the personal-social development of gifted children in many ways.

Because it is something they can do well, it builds up self-esteem.

It is for them a satisfying way to use part of their leisure time. Biographies and autobiographies give them insights into the lives of other gifted persons with whom they may identify themselves. Reading helps them to develop special talents. Literature that is true to life helps them to gain understanding of human relations: why people behave as they do, how people feel when they behave in certain ways. It also helps them to understand themselves and to learn how to handle social situations and to solve or accept life's problems. Through reading, gifted children may gain a certain sense of direction and destiny, and an idea of their social responsibility.

Interrelationships between Written Expression and the Other Language Arts

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Every person in his life as a citizen and in his personal relations needs to be competent in written expression, for without this skill he will be handicapped in social communication. The ability to express ideas in writing is also a basic skill for learning. Every child needs to become competent in writing, because his school progress will depend in large part upon his control of written expression. One objective of elementary education is to teach children to express their thoughts and feelings clearly in writing, and to improve each year in the ability to use this skill for purposes that require written expression.

The following sections summarize significant research studies in written language with their implications for classroom teaching. These studies relate to the following topics: language interrelationships, the role of functional learn-

ing in acquiring mastery of written language, readiness for written expression, beginnings of written work in the primary grades, handwriting and written expression, needs for written expression above the primary grades, the importance of letter writing in daily life, acquiring improved techniques and good form in writing, creative expression, spelling as a tool for writing. Needed research is indicated at the end of this report.

Interrelationships Among Various Phases of the Language Arts

A number of authorities have pointed out the interrelationships that exist among the language arts: oral and written communication, reading, spelling, and handwriting (5, 28, 45,

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48, 59). Writing is ordinarily the last of the common forms of language communication to develop, the skill that is learned later than oral comprehension, speech, or even reading.

Writing depends upon oral language and comprehension, it is associated with skill in reading, and it is related to steady growth in control of the tools of spelling and handwriting. Children learn to write in part from reading correctly written context which illustrates sentence form, syntax, punctuation, diction, and correct spelling (5).

Russell found high intercorrelations among the language skills (48). He advocated considering the teaching of spelling as a phase of general language achievement. Townsend also found substantial correlations between spelling ability and reading, vocabulary and academic aptitude (59).

In view of the relatedness that exists among these different phases of languages expression, more integration should be achieved in language instruction in school experiences. Written English, oral expression, reading, spelling, and handwriting can all be taught more meaningfully and economically through capitalizing on the interrelationships that exist among these skills. For bilingual children and slow learners the urgency is particularly great to bind all these skills together in a unified whole through common vocabulary and context.

Developmental Sequences in Written Expression

Studies of child development have disclosed new evidence concerning the sequential stages through which children pass in achieving mastery of written expression. This skill like oral language is achieved through developmental learning. Learning to express ideas in writing is rooted in the total pattern of each child's growth. There is a considerable period of time in early child life that is preparatory to learning to write. Following this readiness period, there

is a succession of stages through which all children pass in gaining facility in writing the mother tongue (38, 63, 54, 55).

The suggestion from these findings is that teachers need to understand the significance of developmental stages in linguistic expression so that they can relate classroom instruction year by year to the child's maturing capacities for learning to write. Otherwise instruction and child development may be at cross purposes. If this suggestion were followed, fewer teachers would stress precision and formalities in written expression ahead of freedom of expression and interest in writing something for others to read.

A Functional Approach in Written Expression

The newer approach in teaching pupils to write in contrast to traditional methods is a functional one—language is considered a tool for use in life activities rather than a separate school subject. Needs and opportunities for writing pervade the entire curriculum. Pupils learn to write as needs for written expression arise, and they continue to develop skill in written expression while using it to solve problems requiring writing. The result is that learning is more meaningful; at the same time, more naturalness of expression is achieved.

The accent in good teaching is placed on learning through experience in contrast to formal drill on isolated exercises; teaching written expression not as a separate school subject but as a tool to be used for school and life activities. Instead of teaching written language as an isolated subject it is tied in with all the other phases of language expression, and these in turn are related to the child's total school program and his life experiences as a whole. The teacher capitalizes on all the natural opportunities child life affords for real writing because skill in writing improves when there is something that needs to be written. The best writing is done in schools where the best thinking and problem solving goes on. Children are motivated to write

better when the object is to publish the material in the school magazine, to mail a letter to a real person, to participate in an assembly program by reading a script, etc. (50, 51, 52, 53).

Strickland has described the many situations which lead to written expression (54). Learning to write depends upon a rich experiential background, according to modern authorities. Richer living at school provides a better background for learning to express ideas in writing (53, 54).

Readiness for Written Expression

The readiness concept so long appreciated in reading applies equally well to written expression. As in the case of reading, instruction in written language at school may have little value unless the children show readiness for it in terms of mental and linguistic maturity. Some children are ready to profit from beginning experiences and from systematic practice in context writing ahead of others.

Readiness for written expression assumes good oral language, correct speech habits, ability to relate ideas, as well as interest in communicating ideas. Knowing that words stand for ideas and meanings is the first step in readiness. Teachers are advised not to do work in written language with their pupils until oral language is sufficiently mature as shown by the child's ability to talk in correctly phrased sentences (14, 30, 54). The child who is ready for written expression shows readiness in terms of psychomotor and physical skills such as eye-hand control, muscular coordination, speech development; mental powers which imply that the child has ideas to express and capacity to learn through practice; environmental background that has afforded opportunities to observe others make use of writing and that provides the child with occasions which stimulate him to write for himself.

Telling and retelling stories gives the beginner practice in sentence structure and acquaintance with the sequence of ideas for writ-

ing. Children also obtain good experience with correct sentence form in their reading lessons.

Beginnings of Written Language

In the primary grades the chief use of language is oral but this does not preclude the beginning of written expression which grows out of the need to write or some purpose the child has for communicating with attempts at writing the things he knows and understands.

According to Dawson (14), young children may have the following purposes in writing:

1. To communicate news or messages to people away
2. To make records of plans and events
3. To express thoughts and emotions creatively

After oral language habits are well-established the children are ready to begin writing through a combination of oral and written work.

The modern practice is to teach language through experience units which provide real occasions for writing brief notes, simple descriptions, or reports. The theme may be "The Postman" with a post office in the classroom. First there is group composition, with the teacher doing the actual writing as the children observe the writing being done. This is the child's first participation in the making of written records. In this beginning stage the teacher assumes responsibility for correct language form and spelling, even for the handwriting task in recording ideas. Composing the experience story is an intermediate step in learning to write (10, 11, 14, 32, 35, 37, 39, 54). The sight of the teacher writing, understanding the reason for it as well as the value of it, motivates the children to want to write also. Observing the teacher writing gives the child a correct pattern to imitate. He sees what it means to write something that can be read by others. The child's next step is copying the group composition, and finally, writing independently.

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from writing their own stories, first copying from the board, reading them over, illustrating them and taking them home. They get simple writing practice in labeling their drawings.

The Maury School bulletin shows the close relation that is maintained in primary teaching between reading and writing (39).

Stages in the Development of Written Language

Several authorities have outlined the stages through which children progress in learning to write (14, 54). These are:

1. Free oral expression relating to school life and home life events.
2. The teacher records these expressions on chart or board in script text. The children read the sentences.
3. The children learn to spell some of the words. They are called on to help write the text.
4. Children copy the text from the board into their notebooks.
5. The children show more independence in writing for themselves, but still need considerable help from the teacher who gives help and guidance as needed while the children are writing.
6. The children's writing is now largely independent. They use reference sources to help with spelling and word meanings.

The wise teacher knows how to pace instruction for each of these successive stages. There is no point in hastening through any one of them ahead of each new step in readiness. With good teaching, the pupil is soon ready to abandon copying for independent writing, but he still needs much help and guidance. A good illustration of teacher guidance in a free writing experiment has been described by Gunderson (26). By the end of the second grade all the children in a typical class should have gained some degree of ability to write independently, though they will not all have attained the same

standard of quality (14). A mature eight-year-old may be asked to report on a topic such as "Milk." He selects a simple pamphlet on this topic, takes notes, and then gives a report to the class. He may be interested in doing some creative writing (36).

New language workbooks that have been published during the past fifteen years combine the primary child's work in speaking, reading, writing and spelling. Among the publishers of these materials are Scott, Foresman & Company, Chicago; Educational Publishers, Minneapolis; Lyons and Carnahan, New York.

Picture stories which aid oral communication also provide a basis for written work.

Beginnings in Matters of Form

Dictated context, written down by the teacher in early stages of written expression is used for lessons in sentence formation, punctuation, and spelling. Even second graders gain reasonable knowledge of capitalization and punctuation as the teacher points out these features in sentences. The pupils soon recognize that no sentences are well-dressed without them.

Teachers of primary grade children are advised not to overstress matters of form. In working to improve written form with young children work at only one thing at a time, e.g. capital letter for beginning each sentence or the period, then both together. By the end of Grade 2 the child should know the use of the period and question mark, and should have formed the habit of capitalizing "I" (11, 14).

Writing and Reading in the Primary Grades

Manuscript writing used by the teacher for preparation of script text, charts, and writing at the board provides an integrating link among the language skills of reading, writing, spelling, and handwriting (32). When the writing is all done in print script style both by teachers and pupils, it ties in with reading lessons.

Handwriting and the Beginning of Written Expression

It stands to reason that skill in handwriting and spelling is needed to gain independence in writing. These skills are gained from the first experiences in copying the teacher's recording of group compositions. The use of manuscript writing in the lower grades facilitates earlier attainment of ability in written expression because it is so easy to learn. With the simpler manuscript writing styles, written composition can be begun earlier and carried on more successfully because sentences written in manuscript are easier to copy and the manuscript forms are easier to hold in mind when the child tries to compose independently.

Manuscript writing can be an aid or not in composition depending upon how it is taught. If stress is on copying functional writing and whole, meaningful words, there is more relation between handwriting and composition than when writing begins with circles, lines, or separate letter forms (31, 32, 42).

Spelling and Written Composition

Within recent years list spelling, that is, the learning of isolated words in blocks or column has given way to integrated spelling—learning the commonest words that are actually needed in writing something and learning to spell through actual practice in recording ideas on paper. This change is due to the growing recognition that the words children learn in isolation are not spelled correctly when they are needed in writing, and the words they often need in writing have not been learned in the drill on words in isolated lists. Superior results were reported when spelling was linked with writing developed in social studies units (61). Current practice favors building up class lists of needed words and individual pupil lists.

Children are encouraged to try out spelling for themselves, then to try to appraise their own effort. They look up doubtful words in a simple list to check accuracy of the spelling (9, 29, 31, 41, 49, 58).

More attention is being given to frequency counts of words used in writing as a basis for constructing spelling lists. The ultimate purpose of these studies is to construct spelling word lists that have a closer relation to children's needs in writing in contrast to conventional lists that give undue weight to rarely used words of adult formal writing (19, 20, 22, 27, 40, 47).

The two reports made by Betts of word counts in commercial spellers and standard graded spelling lists prove that there is no substantial agreement among spellers as to the words to be included in the total elementary school spelling vocabulary or in the grade placement of these words (6, 7).

A small proportion of words in our total language vocabulary do a large part of the work of communicating ideas. The vast proportion of words in the dictionary seldom get a workout. Fitzgerald has described the use of a core vocabulary and a basic life spelling vocabulary (19). Hildreth has reported the construction of an elementary school spelling vocabulary based on Rinsland's word frequency study (29, 32).

Improvement of Written Expression in the Upper Grades

In order to advance in written expression in the middle and upper grades, authorities recommend, as in the primary years, that the children have something real to write about (53). All writing should be related to children's purposing. Improvement comes about through practice of functional writing in both primary and higher grades. Dora V. Smith pointed out the dangers of language work as exercise—doing isolated from the child's real purposes for writing. She urged that special care be taken to insure a rich program of well-motivated enterprises in which language is needed as a tool, so that there can be continual development of meaning and a challenge to social purposing (51, 52, 53). Theme writing is being eliminated in favor of a wider range of writing for

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As the upper grades are reached, formal and informal writing begin to digress more widely than before. However, brief and direct expression is in vogue; consequently, children are taught to express themselves in natural, easily intelligible, readable style in contrast to the former stilted expressions that have been perpetuated in formal theme writing in English classes. "Shirt sleeve" English is a form of written expression that is closer to our spoken language.

The Place of Letter Writing in Modern Teaching

All authorities agree that since letter writing is the commonest form of written expression most people use, it should receive major attention in classroom instruction (12, 15, 32, 42, 54, 56).

In letter writing the children learn points of etiquette in social and business correspondence, what to say, how to say what one wishes to say, what writing materials to use, standards to be met. By the end of the 4th grade the child should know correct form in letter writing (11).

Creative and Imaginative Expression in Writing

The claims of practical writing must take precedence in school instruction over creative efforts in written expression. Now that there is a closer tie up among all phases of life both in and out of school with instruction in written expression, practicing writing as a form of self-expression assumes a larger place in childhood experience and in school instruction. Creative expression in any art form reveals the child's personality, his originality, his individuality. One purpose in encouraging free expression in writing is to give children outlets for feeling, spontaneous creativity with ideas expressed in words in a medium available to everyone. The child's stored up ideas become the chief source of creative writing effort.

Creative expression in writing can be done in every phase of school learning, in every area of study—science, social studies, literature, dramatics, even health and safety. The best writing is coming from the schools where the most free writing is done, where children are encouraged to put their original ideas on paper (1, 13, 16, 17, 32, 36, 54, 57, 64).

Attention to Correct Form in Written Expression above the Primary Grades

Correct form is essential in writing, otherwise the material is hard to read and interpret. The situation is different from oral usage in which the sound of the voice and the speaker's facial expression help to convey the intended meaning. For this reason higher standards must be maintained in written than in oral expression.

The technical skills of written composition which include correct usage in sentence structure, diction, clarity of ideas, punctuation, capitalization, diction, spelling, functional grammar, manuscript form, all need to be made automatic so that the writer's full attention can be given to the meaning back of what he is trying to express. Fluency and accuracy go together. The child who knows good form goes ahead writing with more confidence.

By the end of the 4th grade the pupils should be accustomed to putting a period after abbreviations and should be familiar with capitalization of words frequently used that require a capital.

Since our language is in a fluid state, not static but ever changing, standards of correct usage are always subject to modification. There can be no absolute, inflexible standards that endure for all time. Teachers must allow for this fact in evaluating children's work.

Research studies favor the learning of correct form in functional written expression, grammar, punctuation, rather than through rote memorization of rules (42). Upper grade com-

position work integrates diction, vocabulary, and grammatical usage in the course of purposeful writing.

The pupils may view their compositions flashed on the board by means of an opaque projector. This becomes a socialized experience as the children read together to see good and poor features of the compositions.

Enriched vocabulary is a factor in improved writing. Increase in vocabulary comes from wide range experiences that require verbal expression. Teaching the use of the dictionary is recommended to facilitate expression and to build word power (60).

Automatic fluency in handwriting facilitates putting down thoughts on paper, in the upper grades as in the earlier years. The writer is free to think of ideas he wishes to express instead of being distracted by mechanics of the writing process.

Modern Viewpoint Concerning the Teaching of Grammar

Modern authorities advocate teaching grammar and correct usage not by rule, but in association with functional speech and writing. In a comparison study, Smith reported finding no difference between schools teaching and those not teaching formal grammar (53). Greene, too, found that training in formal grammar did not transfer to any significant extent to writing or to recognizing correct English (25). These findings bear out the results of numerous studies that have been conducted for nearly half a century. The authorities recommend that teachers avoid teaching diagramming and grammatical rules.

Needed Research

The validation of the newer trends in teaching written expression awaits more extensive research in a number of areas. Some of the problems which merit further study are outlined in this section.

Relatively little research has been done on

the best methods of developing the child's powers of communication in actual situations requiring written communication. More valid and reliable comparative studies are needed of separate and integrated teaching.

The relation between oral and written language throughout the elementary school years needs further study.

The extent of incidental learning in all phases of written expression when the child is engaged in purposeful writing relative to school and life activities should be investigated.

What are the best ways to stimulate children's efforts in creative writing?

Do all children need a regular daily drill period?

There is need of research on the following topics having a bearing on the spelling vocabulary:

The words children and adults use when they write. Computation of the overlap between children's and adults' word usage in informal types of writing. Study of word usage in adult informal and formal writing.

The average spelling vocabularies of children at representative age levels (e.g., 9, 12, 15).

The range in spelling skill to be found in typical school children at different age levels.

The values of proof reading and how best to develop children's skill in proof reading.

Other problems relate to:

Individualized instruction in written expression. How is this to be achieved?

Better methods of diagnosing weaknesses and helping children overcome them.

The best techniques for helping slow learners with written expression.

The place of textbooks and workbooks in written language instruction.

Methods for the appraisal of written English throughout the grades.

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The validity and reliability of existing techniques for appraising outcomes in written expression.

The construction of new methods for evaluating outcomes in written work.

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All persons interested in the development of national elections and the Presidency will welcome the sixth edition of Walter Tulley's *The Presidential Recorder*. With information presented in tabular form for easy reference, *The Presidential Recorder* contains such pertinent facts concerning elections since 1789 as the candidates, their parties, the size of the electoral and popular votes, the place and date of birth of the victors, their profession, religion, and nationality, their age at the time of election,

and the names of their parents, their wives, and the number of children.

Other information includes vital statistics about the Presidential office, and the Index of National Parties which lists sixty three parties and historical data concerning them.

The Presidential Recorder may be ordered from A. C. Croft Publications, 100 Garfield Ave., New London, Conn. Minimum order is for two copies for a dollar.

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Current English Forum

There has long been a feeling that the grammar of a language ought to be conformable to "the laws of logic." The eighteenth century attempts to formulate a universal grammar were made by men who knew the logic of Aristotle. The primary purpose of language was to express relations between ideas and feelings. Formal logic was the science of expressing relations between ideas and concepts; *ergo*, the grammar of any and all languages should consist of structures and rules which conformed to the laws of logic, so completely set forth for all time by Aristotle and so fully expounded by the medieval schoolmen. Such lapses from strict adherence to formal logic as Greek and Latin exhibited were to be regarded as the "corruptions" resulting from the distressing tendency of men to be illogical. One theory held that there had once been a perfectly logical universal language, created whole by the Deity and conferred upon our first parents. A strict application of the principles of formal logic, it was held, could restore the corrupted languages of men to their original logical perfection. The belief that "grammar is really just a matter of logic" has persisted to our own day and underlies many of the rules and prohibitions of our English grammar texts and handbooks. The purpose of this brief discussion is to demonstrate that, while our modern English language *has* a "logic," the logic is not that of Aristotle and the schoolmen, but rather a logic of human psychology and sociology.

"It's me" has established itself as a usage of educated people in informal, everyday speech. If one pronoun of objective inflection can follow a form of *to be* used as a linking verb, then "logically" any other objective case pronoun should be equally acceptable in this word-order position. But "It's us," "It's her," "It's him," and "It's them," are still felt to be sub-standard English. Why is this the case? Perhaps more

people have had occasion to refer to themselves in their daily speech over a long period of time than they have had to refer to others. Also, we have developed a feeling over the centuries for the "subject territory" and the "object territory" of the English sentence. We tend to feel that what follows the verb is in "object territory." A combination of two causes, therefore, has led us to pattern "It's me" after sentences like "He hit me." The same feeling for object territory has made for the prevalence of sentences like "It's him" in so-called "illiterate" or "vulgar" speech. Speakers of standard English, however, have been subjected to training in formal, "logical" grammar, as well as to the influence of the speech patterns of their social group. Thus, the "logic" of uncultivated English employs the objective case pronouns in all instances, while the "logic" of Standard English accepts "It's me," which occurs commonly, but rejects "It's him," etc., because (a) it is not "logical" to have objective case pronouns after a linking verb, and (b) it makes for social disapproval to use any of these parallel locutions other than "It's me."

In the past tense our Modern English verbs now employ a common form for all three persons, both in the singular and in the plural (*walked, talked, threw, blew*). In the present tense our verbs have leveled to a common form with the single exception of the *-s* inflection for the third person singular (*she talks, he writes, etc.*), except for the irregular forms of the verb *to be*. Thus, with the exception of the third person singular, there are no problems of subject-verb agreement in Modern English for most verbs. This one situation, however, gives rise to a conflict between the demands of formal logic and the forces of psychological impulse and social practice. According to formal logic a third person singular subject ought to govern a verb with the *-s* inflection. Where the

verb immediately follows the subject, this is the practice in Standard English. ("A bird *flies*"; "The boy *reads* well"). When, however, a plural noun or pronoun intervenes between the subject and the verb in such cases, there is a strong tendency to feel the plural word as the subject, owing to its proximity to the verb. Thus, formal logic demands "The supply of pencils is on the desk," regarding "of pencils" as a modifier of "supply." But the plural form, "pencils," occurring before the verb, makes for such sentences as "The supply of pencils are on the desk" or "The supply of pencils seem adequate." If such sentences seem "bad grammar," they are increasingly characteristic of informal Standard English. First, a psychological force makes for the practice; then increasing frequency of use makes for social acceptance.

The so-called indefinite, singular pronouns like *everyone* and *everybody*, despite their singular forms, have a strongly plural force. Thus, sentences like "Everybody cheered and threw *their* hats in the air" and "Everyone of them *have their* reasons" seem to be increasing in everyday speech, even among educated speakers.

A New Readability Formula for Primary-Grade Reading Materials, an article by George Spache which appeared in the March issue of the *Elementary School Journal*, proposes a formula applicable to materials written for individuals reading on levels below grade IV. Mr. Spache's formula uses sentence length as a predictive measure and judges all words outside the Dale list of 769 words as hard words.

Spache states that the three leading formulas—the Flesch, the Lorge, and the Dale-Chall—are applicable for the evaluation of materials written for adults, while the two written for evaluating primary materials, the Lewerenz and the Wilkinson formulas, are lengthy and cum-

bersome. At present there is a kind of linguistic schizophrenia among the users of Standard English. In their familiar, everyday speech educated people are being governed by this logic of psychological force and social acceptance, while at the same time self-consciously conforming to the formal rules which they have learned in school when called upon to speak and write for formal business and professional purposes. Since the great majority of Standard English speakers have occasion to use the locutions that are increasingly characteristic of their relatively uninhibited everyday speech with far more frequency than they do the formally logical patterns, it may well be that English usage based upon psychological impulse, and the social acceptance consequent upon it, will eventually find its way to the level of formal use. This would occasion considerable pain in some quarters, but there is at least a reasonable chance that it *will* happen.

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[Note: This department is sponsored by The Council's Committee on Current English Usage, Margaret M. Bryant, *chairman*.]

bersome. His formula for predicting the grade level of a primary textbook is: .141 average sentence length per 100 words, plus .086 words outside the Dale "Easy Word List" of 769 words, plus .839. Certain rules guiding the word count are followed, and they may be found in the original article.

Dr. Spache will supply upon request a sample worksheet for teachers who wish to apply the formula. Write to him at the University of Florida Reading Laboratory and Clinic, University of Florida, Gainesville. The user will also need the Dale list, which is available from the Bureau of Educational Research, Ohio State University, Columbus.

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The Educational Scene

Edited by WILLIAM A. JENKINS¹

The Harvest of Books is the title of the most recent supplement to the *Chicago Schools Journal*. Four hundred books (out of 1300 children's books published between September 1952 and September 1953) were selected for classification and annotation. The classification was arranged into four groups: (1) new editions and reprints; (2) for the youngest; (3) for the in-betweens; and, (4) for the teens. The annotations include the name of the illustrator, if any, the number of pages, and price, in addition to a sentence or two about the book.

The authors, Eloise Rue, Elizabeth J. Wilson, Marcella G. Krueger, and Margaret Sandine, point to Sept. 1952-Sept. 1953 as a year rich in professional literature. *The Children's Book Field* by Jean Poindexter Colby (Pellegrini), *Twentieth Century Children's Books* by Frank Eyre (devoted to the British field; published by Bentley), *A Critical History of Children's Literature: A Survey of Children's Books in English from Earliest Times to the Present* by Meigs, Eaton, Nesbitt, and Viguers (Macmillan), and *The Unreluctant Years: A Critical Approach to Children's Literature* by Lillian H. Smith (ALA) are cited by the authors. In the content field they feel that *Time for Fairy Tales Old and New*, an anthology edited by May Hill Arbuthnot is outstanding: "... many a mother or teacher, or camp director will want (it) within reach, when children grow restless, for the folktales, fables, myths, epics and modern fantasies it contains."

In making the compilation the authors noted some trends in the children's book publishing field. They felt that the most important one is the trend toward a series of books—the non-fiction title prepared in the same pattern of number of pages, binding, price, and age level. Such series as the Landmark Books, the Real

Books, and the Cadmus Books are typical of this group. The Junior Literary Guild's E. or Easy reading group, which fits in between the picture book and the middle grade levels, also was welcomed by the authors.

On the negative side, the authors felt that there is a tendency by some authors to write fiction with weak plots which might better be written as nonfiction. They feel that children like their information direct to satisfy curiosity and organized for easy reference in school use.

Since the *Chicago Schools Journal* is published principally for the public school workers of Chicago, readers of *Elementary English* cannot purchase a copy of the *Harvest of Books Supplement*. However, copies of the supplements usually are placed with educational libraries, and teachers may be able to locate a copy in a library near their school.



The Boys' Clubs of America have released a *Summary of Junior Book Awards Program 1953*, a report of reading programs in 123 Boy's Clubs. Again, the report is not available to our readers so we shall try to summarize the findings:

Adventure: Greater interest among boys ten to sixteen was shown this year in books of adventure, whether the story was laid in the past or the present, than in any previous year. But this was not true of just any adventure story. The characters had to be real, the action had to happen rather than be told, the end couldn't "let down," and the boys had to visualize themselves in the hero's shoes.

Boys Today: Many comments about books with boys in present-day surroundings concerned the beginning. Many boys found the beginnings dull, the authors repeating themselves, or the

¹Wisconsin State College, Milwaukee.

action listless. The stock character of the crochety old man came in for criticism and many of the boys wanted to "drown him." Generally, though, everyday stories were popular.

Family Stories: Boys' Club boys generally did not care for family stories. They felt that many of the stories emphasized the family from the girls' point of view, and that too much "sameness" appeared in many family stories.

Animals: Animal stories were still popular with the boys but they wanted original material, and they felt that a favorite dog or horse character was not sufficient to carry the book if other characters were not well developed. They were scornful of over-sentimentality.

Aviation: The boys preferred books of facts on aviation to books of fiction.

Biography: Biographies of such people as Lincoln, Kit Carson, Wild Bill Hickok, Davy Crockett, Paul Revere, and Chief Black Hawk have always been popular with boys. Other biographies were read because the books "looked exciting." The boys' most frequent comment about biographies for their own age group was that the story (not the language) was too juvenile.

Mystery Stories: All the boys liked a good mystery, and they readily criticized a bad one. The way the story was written, the plot, and the mystery itself were criticized by the boys. They disliked wordiness, childishness, and slowness of action.

Indians: There was a good response to Indian stories except in areas where the boys had a lot of Indian lore in school.

Northerns: There has been a growing interest in books of the North and boys ask for the same ingredients in their Northerns as they did in their Westerns: a fast-moving, well plotted story, with strong characters and action, against a well developed background.

Fantasy: Boy from 7 to 11 expressed greater en-

thusiasm for books of fantasy than those who were older. Boys of eight and nine consistently called them "silly" and liked them.

Folklore and Legends: Boys did not seem to be attracted to reading for themselves tall tales, folk tales, legends, or stories of legendary characters. However, skillful introductions to a number of such books by advisors and librarians, or reading aloud to a group, aroused the boys' interest.

Out of This World: Space stories and facts about space travel and the like have a large and enthusiastic following. However, a few boys dismissed the stories as being too fantastic.

Sports: The favorite subjects were baseball and basketball but, as with animal stories, there was a large amount of criticism. The boys felt that many of the stories were dull, like a newspaper story, or just another sports story.

Facts: When the information was presented in an attractive way and in language that was clear and which made the subject interesting to them, the boys read books of facts with enjoyment and asked for more.

Other People, Other Lands: The boys liked to make friends with boys in other lands, but they said they did have trouble with the foreign names.

Sea, Ships, and Sailors: Boys from 13 and up often read sea stories when they wouldn't read books on other subjects.

Series Books: The boys liked to read books in series. The series were especially good for the one-book boy, for they encouraged him to take another book when he turned in the first one. The books built up his confidence in his reading skill and gave him security if other books in the series were of an equal ability and interest level. Series which were not geared so skillfully to reading levels were less popular.

It is unfortunate that this summary, which

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could be so helpful in getting boys to read and in acquainting teachers with books that they like and dislike, is not available for general distribution. The comments on specific books cannot be summarized here, which again is unfortunate too because they give a more complete insight into boys' reading tastes than the rather general comments repeated above. There may be a few copies of the report available, and so we suggest that teachers who would like a copy inquire of the Publications Service, Boys' Clubs of America, 381 Fourth Avenue, New York 16, whether a copy can be obtained.



Considerations which should be made in selecting *Books for the Deaf Child*, basic principles in teaching and interesting a deaf child to read in general, and at various stages, and a bibliography of suitable books—picture books, picture dictionaries, general information books, traditional and other story books, and inexpensive books—form an interesting article by Helen Woodward in the October *Volta Review*.

Miss Woodward emphasizes the idea that books are an even more important resource for the deaf child than they are for other children. The deaf child cannot pick up information through conversation. He has to "see" most of his information and experiences. Only through reading can he become familiar with the patterns of language. He cannot learn to love reading by being *read to* either. The problem of building interest which will carry him over difficult reading on his own is greater with a deaf child.

Some of the points which Miss Woodward highlights are these:

1. A deaf child cannot read the adult lips and the lines of print at the same time, while another child can read and hear the words at the same time.

2. Books should have a picture on nearly

every page, and the pictures should almost tell the story.

3. Do not rely on appearance or size of a book as an index of its difficulty.

4. There should be lots of repetition in the story.

5. The point of the story should be within the child's comprehension and the setting not too far removed from his experience.

Miss Woodward describes five stages in the development of reading for the deaf child. Her bibliography is keyed to these stages.



With reference to their personal reading, teachers may be interested in Benjamin Appel's "The Paperback Revolution" in the November 28 *Saturday Review*. Aside from the effect of the trend on the writer of fiction, Mr. Appel points out that "paperback" and "reprint" do not refer to the same thing as they once did. "Paperbacks" can now mean "original." Authors and publishers have found that the paperback book can expect a larger return than can its hardback brother. To a reading public whose habits have been changed since the advent of Pocket Books in 1939, the habit of accepting the paperback as a book that has stood the test of time or one which already has had success as a hardback, must be changed. Once again the reader will have to shop cautiously.

His benefits may be that he will get more fresh material—innovations, experiments, and standard works that a publisher could not gamble on publishing as a hardback—or that he may get a lot of "junk," which may flood the market as a result of attempts to capitalize on the current demand for paperbacks of all sorts.

Mr. Appel noted that the three largest paperback companies, Pocket Books, Bantam, and New American Library, have not published paperback originals as yet. But he notes that in 1953 1200 paperbacks will appear, 225 of

which will be originals, and with such competition other publishers may be forced into the original paperback field. This is especially true since paperback sales declined slightly in the last few months of 1953. He noted further that for two decades after the Civil War the paperbound novel was read by millions. In 1880 simultaneous hardback-paperback publication was instituted. Yet, by 1900 poor fiction, poor printing, inferior paper, and cutthroat competition had killed the paperbound book. Will history repeat itself, he asks.



Citizenship for Boys and Girls (Junior Life Adjustment Series) is a recent release of Science Research Associates, 57 West Grand Avenue, Chicago 10. Authored by Stanley E. Dimond of the University of Michigan, the booklet is written for elementary and junior high school youngsters. It aims to develop an understanding of the many-sided aspects of good citizenship. It describes what citizenship means and how it can be a part of everyday living in the home, the school, and the community. The booklet will help children realize that citizenship involves duties as well as privileges and that these do not begin at the voting age of 21, but as soon as the child is old enough to assume responsibility.

Junior Life Adjustment Series booklets cost forty cents each, with discounts for quantity orders.



The 1954 *Annotated List of Books for Supplementary Reading* has been published by the Children's Reading Service, 1078 St. John's Place, Brooklyn 13, N. Y. The *List* categorizes books by grade level and subject matter and books suitable for remedial reading in all groups are indicated. In addition, there is a short section of books which may be used principally for remedial work. The *List* costs ten cents.



A complete catalog of films available, describing the structure, functions, and activities of the United Nations and its Specialized Agencies, is available from the Department of Public Information, United Nations, New York, N. Y.



Growing Up with Books is a list of about 250 of the best books for children, arranged by title and interest, published by the *Library Journal*. Minimum orders of five for 25 cents may be placed with the *Journal* at 62 W. 45th Street, New York 36.



Using Free Materials in the Classroom has been published by the Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development of the NEA. The booklet explains how teachers may locate, obtain, select, process, and use free or sponsored materials. The booklet may be ordered from the NEA at 1201 16th Street, NW, Washington 6. The price is 75 cents.



Materials for Looking and Listening Films

Encyclopedia Britannica Films: Holiday films on home and school relations (5 min. each, color). A series of six films showing classroom activities to celebrate six holidays. The titles are *Haloween Party*, *A Thanksgiving Play*, *Christmas—The Story of a Gift*, *St. Valentine's—A Talking Valentine*, *Washington's Birthday—A Lesson in Courage*, and *Easter Surprise*.

Coronet Films

City Pets, Fun and Responsibility. A primary grade film which shows the proper care of pets to help children realize their responsibility.

Goldilocks and the Three Bears. A primary grade presentation of the children's classic with three real bears.

Disney Films

Disney Cartoon Parades: *Moving Day*, with

Goofy, Donald Duck, and Mickey Mouse; *Band Concert*, starring Mickey Mouse; *Modern Inventions*, with Donald Duck; *On Ice*, Donald and Mickey; and *Mickey's Circus*.



Filmstrips

Filmstrip House: Halfhour Classics Series: Six special stories taken from the Walt Disney films. *Pinocchio*, *Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs*, *Cinderella*, *Peter Pan*, *Robin Hood*, and *Treasure Island* are the titles available.



Recordings

Alpark Educational Records, Inc.: A number of 10-inch 33 1/3 rpm records are available from this company of spontaneous conversations between children and Helen Parkhurst on such subjects as prejudice, criticism, how we like to learn, creating with one's hands, the new baby and sex, prayer, truancy, a child's idea of God, a child's idea of death, anger, and the child's rights.

American Book Company: *How You Talk*. Four 10" vinylite 78 rpm recordings. These are ear-training records, concerned with phonetic consonant sounds. Each record focuses the child's attention on a few specific sounds. Key words of the stories and the names of the characters contain these sounds. *Bobtail Bunny* stress *p*, *b*, and *m*; *Little White Swan*—*s*, *z*, *w*, and *wh*; *Trixie*—*t*, *d*, *n*, and *l*; *The Adventures of Three Little Toads*—*f*, *v*, and *th*; *Two Yellow Cats*—*k*, *g*, *ng*, *y*, and *h*; *Gigi*—*sh*, *zh*, *ch*, *j*, and *r*. The set is for the primary grades. The price for the set is \$6.



Two new catalogs of college audio-visual centers have been published recently. The Audio-Visual Center at Pennsylvania College for Women, Pittsburgh 32, is a 224-page book which includes a complete subject classification and grade-level index, with descriptions of films, filmstrips, and recordings which are available to schools. Teachers may find the section on care of films interesting and valuable.

The University of Illinois Audio-Visual Service, Champaign, has released the largest catalog ever produced by an educational film library. The catalog has 500 pages, describing films, filmstrips, transcriptions, and tape recordings. Copies cost \$1.50 each.



Teaching with Radio, Audio, Recording, and Television Equipment is a new booklet prepared by a joint committee of the U. S. Office of Education and the Radio-Television Manufacturers Association. This fourth report of the committee promotes the use of radio, television, and sound-reproduction equipment in the schools. Previous reports dealt with school sound systems, school recording and playback equipment, and classroom radio receivers. Copies are available from the RTMA, 777 14th Street, NW, Washington 5, or from the U. S. Office of Education.



RCA Victor Division, Educational Services, Camden 2, New Jersey, has published an enlarged second edition of its educational record catalog, which is designed primarily for teachers. The 119-page catalog may be ordered from Educational Services at 10 cents a copy.

BOOKS FOR CHILDREN

EDITED BY MAY HILL ARBUTHNOT

[May Hill Arbuthnot is well-known as teacher, writer, and lecturer in the field of children's books. She is author of the volume, *CHILDREN AND BOOKS* (Scott, Foresman, 1947) and editor of the new *Arbuthnot Anthology of Children's Literature*, Scott, Foresman, 1953.

Easy-to-Read Books

Jupiter and the Cats. By Alice Goudy. Drawings by Paul Brown. Scribner's, 1953. \$2.00. (4-8)

Almost primer reading level, with a genuinely funny plot and a surprise ending, children are going to enjoy Jupiter's dilemma. Except that he hated cats, Jupiter had always been an amiable dog. Then suddenly, cats began to invade his very own yard. He could not chase them away fast enough. No sooner had he driven one over the fence than three more ap-



From *Jupiter and the Cats*

peared on the other side. Finally poor Jupiter suffered a nervous breakdown and still the cats kept coming. The solution was surprisingly simple and Jupiter, left in peace and catless contentment could once more eat, sleep, and be joyful. Paul Brown's drawings are unusually beguiling and the pictures of poor Jupiter at low ebb are both funny and touching.

The Birthday Story. By Ruth Jaeger Buntain. Illustrated by Eloise Wilkin. Holiday, 1953. \$2.00 (5-8)

A little girl in a new neighborhood finds a birthday present on the sidewalk with a "Happy birthday" card "To Terry." In the process of going to every house on the street to find out where the present should go, she becomes friendly with all the children on the street and is delighted when Terry turns out to be an amiable dog. The story has charm and child appeal. The pictures are primer type, and like many of these books for beginning readers, the price seems high for the content and format.

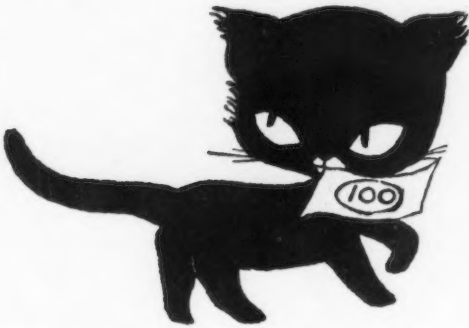
The Story of Su-Su. By Eva Knox Evans. Illustrated by Vana Earle. McKay, 1953. \$2.50. (5-8)

Su-Su is a blue ribbon champion dog. She lives in a city apartment, mostly alone. She is fed, watered, and walked on schedule and on a leash, but she is unloved. An accident lands her in the country where she discovers life, liberty, and the pursuit of chickens. But most important of all, she finds human companionship and love. When it is time for Su-Su to return to city life, she does the best she can to stage a tantrumy sit-down-strike. But it is no use. Back she goes to the city and, we hasten to add, to a happy ending with love and companionship. Amusing pictures add spice to Su-Su's story and here is a splendid moral for dog owners who leave their pets shut up and alone. Even so, the price of

this slight story makes the popularity of grocery store books understandable.

Lucky Blacky. By Eunice Lackey. Illustrated by Winifred Greene. Watts, 1953. \$2.50. (7-10).

A great hue and cry of "Black cats are bad luck. Scat!" sent one poor, half-frozen little kitten into a cat faint on Miss Lucy's front porch. That was too much for Miss Lucy who picked up the half dead morsel of black fur, carried it into the house and warmed and fed it back to life. Miss Lucy was as alone as the black kitten and they loved each other at once. "Lucky Blacky" she called the kitten and sure enough,



From *Lucky Blacky*

good luck walked right into her house. How Lucky Blacky brought happiness to one family after another makes a gay, pleasant story. Many a new leaf was turned over in the process but Blacky managed to reward each of these reformed characters in a unique way. Told with charm and pleasantly illustrated, this little tale has a surprise ending for good measure.

Jasper. By Eleanor Frances Lattimore. Illustrated by the author. Morrow, 1953. \$2.00. (6-10)

Jasper is an island child, living beyond the great bridge that leads to Charleston. Learning to tie his shoe laces, learning that you'd better not fool with cows, looking out for his small sister, finding out the difference between goats and ghosts, these and similar mild adventures make up six-year-old Jasper's world. Only the

attractive pictures show that Jasper is a little Negro boy. The lovely out-of-door world Jasper explores, the warm happy family relationships he enjoys, these all children of approximately Jasper's age would like to share.

The Mission Bell. Written and illustrated by Leo Politi. Scribner's, 1953. \$2.25. (6-10)

Here is the book Leo Politi has wanted to do for several years, and it is one of his best. As a factual record of Father Junipero Serra's journeys and Mission building throughout California, it provides only a suggestion of the whole story and it seems regrettable that the names of the Missions are omitted. But Leo Politi has omitted many facts in favor of communicating to young children something of the inner and spiritual grace of Father Serra's dedicated life. In this Mr. Politi has succeeded to a remarkable degree. With strong, beautiful pictures and simple text the author-artist conveys a sense of the indomitable strength in that frail, suffering body, of the man's faith which saw



From *The Mission Bell*

visions of Missions where others saw only desert, and was strong enough to make those visions come true. Children will feel Father Serra's joyous kindness to people and his love for the Indians. Above all, the man's simple goodness and selfless devotion to his cause shines through every line and picture of this beautiful book. It is an appealing introduction to one of the great figures in California's colorful history.

Picture Stories for the Youngest

Follow the Road. By Alvin Tresselt. Pictures by Roger Duvoisin. Lothrop, 1953. \$2.00. (4-7)

There has been a curious dearth of distinguished picture-stories in the autumn offering, so it is a pleasure to find a new book by this author-artist team. If their *Follow the Wind* caught in words and pictures the wonderful movement of breezes and gales, so this book captures the onward movement of a road that "wouldn't say, couldn't stay, not today." "Where is the road going?" a little boy asks and the book answers him. Through farm lands and forest, woods and meadows, villages and cities, over mountains and down valleys, it goes. Sometimes it is just a little dusty road, sometimes it is a great Superhighway or a Throughway Turnpike. Sometimes there is only one old toad sitting in the middle of a road and sometimes there are thousands of cars speeding by. The text is as lovely and lilting as a poem and the pictures pick up the rhythm and even accelerate the movement. The text will be a delight to read aloud and small devotees of everything on wheels will love the variety of vehicles that galumph or whiz through the lively pictures. The conclusion brings the little boy safely home for the night, only the road goes on and on and on, today, tonight, and evermore.

Tough Guy. By Bianca Bradbury. Pictures by Marie Nichols. Houghton, 1953. \$1.50. (4-7)

Marie Nichols' cats are as irresistible as Claire Newberry's and Bianca Bradbury provides her with a good story to illustrate. This one is about a powder puff of a Persian cat who



From *Tough Guy*

knows he looks like a sissy but is really a tough guy at heart. How he accepts the challenge of

Joe, a striped alley cat, and wins that boy's humble respect is delightfully told and pictured. Toughy going down a dizzying fire escape from a high apartment and Joe walking nonchalantly around its narrow and fearsome window ledges are heart-winners.

Animal Stories

Brighty of the Grand Canyon. By Marguerite Henry. Illustrated by Wesley Dennis. Rand McNally, 1953. (8-14)

Marguerite Henry and Wesley Dennis have surpassed themselves in this story of the little burro whose flying hoofs marked out the Bright Angel trail down the Grand Canyon. There is no age limit to the appeal of this book. The 8's will read it avidly, the 18's will sheepishly borrow it, and the 48's to 80 or thereabouts will read it and enjoy it with unaffected delight. All the humor and heroism of that blithe spirit of the Canyon, that shaggy, braying Bright Angel of a burro, have been captured in the author's spirited text and the artist's superb paintings. And what a story it is—part fact and part fiction, it races along with Brighty tickling the reader's risibility or tearing at his heart strings. There is a human hero too, Uncle Jimmy Owen the famous lion hunter, friend of President Theodore Roosevelt and a friend in need to Brighty over and over again. For Brighty was a friendly soul with a weakness for flapjacks and his sociability was his undoing when he met the wrong kind of human beings. When his first friend, an old prospector, was murdered Brighty transferred his affection to Uncle Jim who bound up his wounds after a battle with a cougar, gave him his freedom whenever Brighty wanted it, welcomed him when he returned and finally saved the burro from death at the hands of the murderer. It is an exciting story with interest and suspense at high pitch. But the story is much more than a series of adventures. It reflects the exuberant zest for living that possesses healthy, wild creatures and their pitiful vulnerability when injured or defeated. It

shows the deep love and understanding that can grow up between men and animals and the hatefulness of human cruelty. The glory of the Canyon, the panorama of changing seasons, the intoxicating freedom of the windswept mesas are all there in the story and the pictures as a background for droll, loveable, heroic Bright Angel of the Grand Canyon.

Finnegan II His Nine Lives. By Carolyn Bailey. Illustrated by Kate Seredy. Viking, 1953. \$2.25. (8-12)

In Finnie's youth, like many a cat or man, for that matter, he made a bad mistake. "Dashing along, blithe and flighty through the drainpipes," he fell hard and deep, and it looked as if his springtime jig was up. But Officer Finnegan not only rescued the cat but started him up the social ladder by way of a visit to a pet hospital. And that is where he was given the name of Finnegan II. Like the knowledgeable cat he was, Finnegan cleaned himself up so handsome-



From *Finnegan II His Nine Lives*

ly that he was soon adopted and eventually landed in a country home of cream and adulation, both human and feline. Finnie was well pleased except that he knew one of his nine lives had gone down the drainpipe and he had only eight to go. How he lost one after the other of his remaining eight makes a good story and leaves Finnegan remarking nonchalantly, "Who said only *nine* lives? I don't believe it."

The story is full of Carolyn Bailey's wit and wisdom and the illustrations show the most successful self-made cat since *Buttons*. Kate

Seredy never made better pictures than Finnie licking his skimpy tail or holding Cal down and scrubbing her or Cal and Finnie comfortably entwined and snoozing. A grand book entirely!

Lone Muskrat. Written and illustrated by Glen Rounds. Holiday, 1953. \$2.25. (8-12)

Glen Rounds is making an important contribution to children's animal lore as well as to their native folklore. This account of a lone muskrat's survival after a forest fire makes good reading. The Old One is not a glamorous figure but his will to live and his courageous battles with enemy after enemy command respect. The intricacies of muskrat dens are described with all the animal's amazing devices for getting air when the stream freezes over. All the minutiae of muskrat life are here in a dramatic story with remarkably fine illustrations by this gifted author-artist. It is to be hoped he will continue the Old One's story in another book, long enough to relate the communal life of muskrats now that the Old One is no longer solitary.

Jan the Dutch Barge Dog. Written and illustrated by G. W. Barrington. Longmans, 1953. (9-14)

It is to be hoped that the rather solid looking pages of this sensitively written dog story will not discourage young readers because it is an unusually rewarding book. The fine drawings of the handsome plumy-tailed keeshond will make every child wish to own one. Jan, a Dutch barge dog, developed an uncanny awareness of things at sea. He would signal nearness to a buoy or the approach of a ship, even in a fog, or the danger of rocks and reefs. The sailors were almost as fond of him as his master, yet through a series of accidents Jan was separated from the boy he loved, nearly drowned, shipwrecked alone at sea, and finally, almost killed by the stupidity of a dog-hating police officer. Two English boys who sensed the dog's nobility, got him away and arranged his reunion with his master. That reunion of boy and dog is one of the most moving and satisfying scenes in the

book. It is all well told and life on the barges that navigate Holland's waterways, makes an interesting background for Jan's story.

Hurry Home, Candy. By Meindert De Jong. Illustrated by Maurice Sendak. Harper, 1953. \$2.50. (8-12).

No one writes about animals with more poignant understanding than Meindert De Jong. His *Smoke above the Lane* was a tender humorous tale of a tramp and a baby skunk. This is a tale of tragic suffering. It concerns a lost puppy, homeless, loveless, always hungry and afraid, with three compulsions—the need to exist, to be invisible, and to be quiet. Yet when the old hound died the puppy heard himself howling. He was afraid and he couldn't seem to stop the howling. Once there had been a home and love. But there was a broom too, a cruel broom that pierced his thin little puppy hide and hurt him to the point of abject misery. So ever after, whenever he saw a broom he fled, and the world seemed to be full of brooms. The final tragedy is almost the end of the cowering, wretched little creature. Instead, it leads to his ultimate security and to a happiness almost too deep for one small dog to encompass.

This is a strange and beautiful book, not to be classified in this category or that. It is a study in fear and its destructive power. It is a study of human beings from a dog's eye view, and painfully revealing. It is a plea for all helpless and homeless creatures which reach out for just a crumb of kindness in a flinty world. Children and grownups may well read this book together and share its pitying tenderness. It will stretch their hearts.

Today's Children

Ready-Made-Family. By Frances Salomon Murphy. Illustrated by Mabel Jones Woodbury. Crowell, 1953. \$2.50. (11-14)

This story about a family of three orphanage children placed in a boarding home is a first rate story, full of problems but non-didacticism

and with characters, child and adult, so well drawn and alive they might be our next door neighbors. Poor Hedwig with the protruding teeth is grateful to the State Home for trying to keep the three of them together, but she can't help wondering why on earth any nice family would want them. But decidedly the Kennedys are nice people and their big old house with a separate and pretty room for each child is beautiful. Mary Rose with her dimples and her curls wins everyone. Hedy tries to be helpful but Peter scowls, is insolent to mother Kennedy, and finally reverts to his old habit of stealing and then lying about it. If father Kennedy had not been a patient and understanding soul, Hedy's new-found happiness would have been wrecked and Peter lost. But those wonderful Kennedys saved Peter from himself and the ready-made-family was bound more closely together than ever with its tears, its laughter, and its love for each other. This is a wonderful story for any children. Girls will like Hedy's ups and downs with her school work, her friends, and her buck teeth. Readers will all yearn to spank Mary Rose, the dimpling tattletale, but even she begins to learn. And boys will like inventive Peter in spite of his misdeeds, which are made as understandable as they are unlovely. This is as good as the author's *A Nickel For Alice*.

Just Like Nancy. By Marian Cumming. Illustrated by Ed Sweet. Harcourt, 1953, \$2.50. (8-12)

This book is a pleasant successor to *All about Marjorie*. In this story seven-year-old Nancy yearns to be like the imaginative Marjorie who can make up games and even poems. But Nancy is a down-to-earth realist and no one is more surprised than she is when Marjorie's poem fails to win the coveted Egg-O-See prize, and her own succinct "Egg-O-See Suits Me" received the exciting check. That event seemed to mark the beginning of good times for Nancy. One pleasant thing happens after another and she rises to each occasion adequately. But not until Nancy broke her arm and

friends and gifts began to pour in did Nancy really feel resigned to being herself. The climax came when Marjorie said, "Nancy, I wish I was just like you!" The sisters are well drawn and their day, 1906, seems fairly contemporary. Only the kindergarten is dated, and why should almost seven-year-old Nancy be in a kindergarten anyway?

The Beatinest Boy. By Jesse Stuart. Illustrated by Robert G. Henneberger. Whittlesey, 1953. \$2.25. (8-12)

This heart-warming little tale is Jesse Stuart's first book for children. But no one who has read his autobiography, *The Thread that Runs So True*, could doubt his understanding of mountaineer children. When orphaned David had to go live with his tall, strange grandmother, he did not expect to like it but to his surprise he did. Grandmother knew just about everything and David learned fast. Together they rescued and nursed back to health a miserable, mangy pup. But the dog rewarded them by turning out to be a first rate hunting dog. David's problem is how to earn money enough to buy a Christmas present for his grandmother. After his plans all fail, he solves his difficulty in a way that will surprise the boys who read the story as much as it did his grandmother. Mountaineer kindness and ingenuity are qualities which the modern child of electric switches and gadgets should know. The illustrations are beautiful and right. The story is slight but its values are worth while.

Mama Hattie's Girl. Written and illustrated by Lois Lenski. Lippincott, 1953. \$3.00. (8-12).

A new regional story by Lois Lenski is a genuinely important event. She moves into a region spiritually and catches the working background of a people, their joys and sorrows, their problems and wonderments, with a sensitive discernment few can equal. In this book she has set herself a difficult task. She follows a Negro family from the deep South to the North and

back again, giving a fair picture of their difficulties and opportunities in both sections. Mama Hattie is Lulu Bell's grandmother and she rules both her daughter and her grandchild like a Queen. Mama Hattie helps earn what she can, but old age and debts are creeping up in spite of her. Even a good day's fishing doesn't help much. Then Lulu Bell's mother Imogene announces suddenly that they are going to leave the miseries of Hibiscus street and go North to find Daddy Joe and good fortune. It is a tragic moment for Mama Hattie when her own turn their backs on her but for Lulu Bell "up North" is the answer to her dreams. A tough neighborhood and an over-crowded school are the first difficulties in the North. A better neighborhood and school help Lulu Bell but neither her mother nor father get decent jobs. So presently, Lulu Bell is sent back to Mama Hattie and new complexities. Nor until Daddy Joe and Imogene return to Hibiscus street to care for old, sick Mama Hattie and their own little girl, is there any joy in life for Lulu Bell.

This is the grimmest of the regional stories. A broken home, the continual battle with poverty, the evils of installment buying, the overwork and underpay of adult Negroes both North and South, these add up to a serious tale. But the book has humor too and Lulu Bell is very much alive, a bewildered but plucky little girl. Children will like the story, the heroine, and Mama Hattie and they will leave them with keener social understanding.

A Distinguished Miscellany

Mr. Revere and I. Set Down and Illustrated by Robert Lawson. Little, Brown, 1953. \$3.00. (9-12)

If it seems odd for a horse to write about his master, just remember it depends upon the horse and his ghost writer, in this case Robert Lawson. Besides, Scheherazade, better known as Sherry, was a horse of parts and for all her snobbish up-bringing liberally endowed with

horse sense. This, together with Mr. Lawson's gift for storytelling and drawing, lend rare luster to Sherry's "Account of Certain Episodes in the Career of Paul Revere."

In the beginning, Sherry was a royalist, the admired mount of Lieutenant Barnstable of the



From *Mr. Revere and I*

Mustardshire Fencibles. But after a horrible voyage to the New World, her master gambled her away and she was presented eventually to Paul Revere. Quite a comedown for a high-nosed champion of royalty! Sherry did not even have a proper stable but lived cozily with the Revere family with her body in a shed and her head in their kitchen, where she could not help overhearing all the grievances and the plotting. To her surprise, she found her opinions changing rapidly and she could not help but love the whole Revere family, even Paul Revere, who loved his horse but never became a good rider. Sherry's accounts of their exploits together are as spirited and fast moving as her flying hoofs. Her own deeds as a patriot horse match her master's and Paul and Sherry make a magnificent team.

Mr. Lawson's drawings for this remarkable story are as fine as any he has ever done. Careful details of Colonial scenes, costumes, and interiors are in these pictures. Droll or gravely beautiful portraits of people reveal more than words can say. Children are going to learn about Colonial life, prerevolutionary plots, the remarkable courage of famous and obscure patriots who were willing to give their all for freedom, more than they will find in many a history. This is a rare book to reread, to chuckle over and to remember.

Mother Goose Riddles. Joseph Low with help from Ruth Low. Illustrated by the author. Harcourt, 1953. \$2.50. (6-10)

Mr. Low has made a modern rebus from familiar Mother Goose rhymes which will provide entertainment for party guests, convalescents, rainy day shut-ins, and anyone who likes to try his wits with a puzzle. Some of them are easy enough to induce a misguided sense of superiority. Then comes a poser, and sooner or later child or grownup is going to be taking a sheepish look at the picture clues in the back of the book. The cover is so beautiful in design that the book should be a parlor piece, but it will be an active one, for neither children nor grownups will let this clever brain-teaser come to rest until the last picture is solved.

Which Was Witch? By Eleanore M. Jewett. Illustrated by Taro Yashinma. Viking, 1953. \$2.50. (9-12)

These "Tales of Ghosts and Magic from Korea" have a rich imaginative quality and settings of unusual beauty. A few of them are variants of familiar European tales but most of them are as fresh and surprising as the amusing "Which Was Witch?" or the romantic "Tiger Woman." Eleanore Jewett, who has retold these stories with rare charm, became interested in them and the Korean people through her anthropologist son-in-law who was stationed in Seoul during World War II. She speaks of the quiet humor, the gentleness, and the vivid im-

agination of the people as shown in their tales. They are full of kindnesses too and forbearance. The Oriental folklore of demons, ghosts, and animal-people are in the stories, but they

are spooky rather than scary. The dramatic way in which they are related makes them ideal material for storytellers, and fortunate are the children who will hear them.

GUEST EDITORIAL

(Continued from Page 2)

to the natural world. *When Will the World Be Mine?*, Miriam Schlein's delightful story of the rabbit who wanted to possess the world, will help the young child adapt to living in a world he can only share. And the Ketchums' very new book, *Stick-in-the-Mud*, helps children see that old confining customs can be changed by the young in years and the young in heart.

Teachers and parents need to be alert to bring together the right child and the right book at the right moment. And they need to share with the child the experience of reading together. Such experiences will do much to help the child take in stride the pressures which are shaping the changing culture of which he is a part.

But a little while ago, as time is measured, man lived in a world of limits. This gave him a certain security. Today man lives in an infinite world. Our children are aware of this without understanding it. A ten-year-old, building a model of the solar system, asked with the earnestness of childhood, "Is infinity a letter or a number?" In the world of books our children will be helped to find answers for themselves which will help them interpret and integrate their personal experiences in living. We need have no fear that the present technological age in which children are maturing will lessen to any degree man's need to re-create himself through reading. Books are here to stay.

Muriel Crosby

Every School Needs a Library is a pamphlet published by the New England School Development Council and the New England School Library Association to stimulate activity in the development and improvement of school libraries. The pamphlet may serve as a basic source on services, needs, costs, and public relations. It lists a bibliography of selected titles

on school library administration and selected aids for the materials collection.

Teachers may order a copy of the pamphlet, for one dollar, from the New England School Development Council, Spaulding House, 20 Oxford St., Cambridge 38, Mass.



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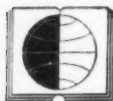
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FEBRUARY, 1954

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By Way of Introduction . . .

Our cover illustration for this issue is reproduced by courtesy of Houghton Mifflin. It is taken from the charming new book of the famous illustrator, LYND WARD, entitled *The Biggest Bear*.

IRWIN L. RAMSEY, who did the discerning article on Holling C. Holling, is an instructor in Elementary Education at the Ohio State University. He wrote at the suggestion of Professor Leland Jacobs, now at Teachers College, Columbia University.

Professor E. W. DOLCH is a frequent contributor to *Elementary English*. He is well-known as a specialist in the teaching of reading, with a special gift for lucidity and practicality.

Nothing could be more gratifying to those who worked so hard to make the Los Angeles convention a success than such a tribute as MARGARET HALL's account of her experience there. In addition to her work with twenty children ranging from first grade to eighth, Mrs. Hall looks after her own five children, who range from age four to age twelve. And, oh yes, she attends San Francisco State College in her spare time.

Spelling remains one of our troublesome problems. BLANCHE SKINNER shows how it can be made both enjoyable and functional with young children.

Everyone knows that instruction in listening is important, but few people have

told us how it can be made effective. PROFESSOR BARBE, who has written for us before, and a graduate student, ROBERT M. MYERS, offer practical suggestions.

HELEN W. PAINTER re-emphasizes important principles which are unfortunately still widely ignored in daily practice. She succeeds in expounding them with persuasiveness and an abundance of concrete detail.

EDITH M. DAVIDSON is well qualified to discuss "Motion Picture Experiences." She is a member of the Board of Directors of the Washington State Department of Audio-Visual Instruction, and President of the Seattle Film Council.

LOUISE HOVDE MORTENSEN again contributes one of her helpful brief articles on dramatics. Another will appear soon.

In the second of the series on Interrelationships of the Language Arts, AGATHA TOWNSEND presents a scholarly summary of the evidence dealing with reading. The series, which is sponsored by the National Conference on Research in English, will be published as a pamphlet this spring.

MR. W. WILBUR HATFIELD, beloved secretary of the Council, now retired, writes in characteristic vein of the Los Angeles meeting. Mr. Hatfield is too modest to report the standing ovation which he received at the time of the presentation of the Sandburg works.